MEMOIRS

OF

THE YEAR Two Thousand Five Hundred.

LE TEMS PRESENT EST GROS DE L'AVENIR.

Leibnitz.

JAMES ARROTT, JR.

Translated from the French,

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE title of this work in the original is The Year Two Thouſand Four Hundred and Forty; but as there appears no reaſon for fixing it to any particular year, we have for the ſake of a round number, called it The Year Two Thouſand Five Hundred. It may be proper to add, that this is the only alteration made by the tranſlator. Though the ſcene of this narrative lies in Paris, yet the reflections in general may be applied, by changing the names of places and perſons, to almoſt all the capital cities of Europe. Who the author of this work is, we will not pretend to determine; perhaps the reader will be ſatisfied with finding that he is a man of ſenſe, of taſte, and learning, of a lively imagination, a ſtrong ſpirit of liberty, and, what is worth them all, a warm benevolence of heart.

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EPISTLE DEDICATORY

To the Year

TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED.

AUGUST and venerable Year! thou who art to bring felicity upon the earth! thou, alas! that I have only in a dream beheld, when thou ſhalt riſe from out the boſom of eternity, thy ſun ſhall enlighten them who will tread upon my aſhes, and upon thoſe of thirty generations, ſucceſſively cut off, and plunged in the profound abyſs of death. The kings that now ſit upon the throne ſhall be no more; their poſterity ſhall be no more. Then ſhalt thou judge the departed monarch, and the writer who lived in ſubjection to his power. The names of the friends, the defenders of humanity, ſhall live and be honoured, their glory ſhall be pure and radiant; but that vile herd of kings, who have been, in every ſenſe, the tormentors of mankind, ſtill more deeply plunged

plunged in oblivion than in the regions of death, can only escape from infamy by the favour of inanity.

The thought survives the man, and forms his most glorious possession; the thought rises from his tomb, assumes an immutable body, becomes immortal. While the thunders of despotism fall and vanish, the pen of the writer, bounding over the interval of time, absolves or punishes the masters of the universe.

I have exercised that authority which nature gave me; I have cited before my solitary reason the laws, the customs, and abuses of the country in which I have lived obscure and unknown. I have felt that virtuous hatred which is due to oppression from a being of humanity; I have detested, purfued with infamy to the utmoft of my power, oppofed all tyranny. But, alas! Auguft and Venerable Year, perhaps to little purpofe, when contemplating thee, have I animated, exalted my ideas; they may appear in thy eyes the mere conceptions of fervitude. Forgive me; the genius of my age furrounds and oppreffes me. Stupidity now reigns; the tranquility of my country refembles that of the grave. I fee nought around me but coloured carcafes, who move and talk, but in whom the active principle of life has never produced the leaft emotion. Even now, the

the voice of philoſophy, wearied and dejected, cries in the midſt of mankind as in the centre of a boundleſs deſert.

Oh! could I but divide the term of my exiſtence, with what pleaſure would I inſtantly deſcend to the grave! with what joy ſhould I part from the gloomy, wretched aſpects of my co-temporaries, to awake in the midſt of thoſe fair days that thou ſhalt bring forth; that bliſsful period, when man ſhall have regained his courage, his liberty, his independence, and his virtue! How happy, could I but behold thee otherwiſe than in a dream! Haſte! thou age ſo deſired, thou object of my earneſt wiſhes! Come, and pour down happineſs upon the earth! But what do I ſay? Delivered from the illuſions of a pleaſing dream, I fear, alas! I fear, that thy ſun is more like to caſt a gloomy light on a formleſs maſs of aſhes, and of ruins.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

Year Two Thouſand Five Hundred.

INTRODUCTION.

THAT all ſhould be well is the wiſh of the philoſopher. By that term, which doubtleſs has been abuſed, I mean that ſagacious and virtuous being, who deſires the general happineſs, in conſequence of thoſe determinate ideas of order and harmony that he entertains. Evil is diſguſting to the ſight of the wiſe man; he therefore declaims againſt it; he is accuſed of ill-nature; but wrongfully; he knows that evil abounds on the earth; but, at the ſame time, he has conſtantly preſent to his mind that beautiful and ſtriking perfection, which might and ought to reſult from the conduct of a rational being.

In effect, what ſhould prevent us from hoping, that, after running round the wide-extended circle of their follies, guided by their paſſions, men, jaded and diſguſted, may not return to the pure lights of reaſon? Why may not the human race reſemble an individual? Touchy, haſty, thoughtleſs, in youth; gentle,

patient, prudent, in age *. The man who argues thus impoſes on himſelf the duty of being juſt.

But do we know what is perfection? Can it appertain to a weak and limited being? Is it not that great ſecret hid from us by the preſent life? Muſt we not put off mortality ere we can comprehend that ſublime enigma?

In the mean time, let us endeavour to render this life tolerable; or, if that be too much, let us at leaſt dream that it is ſo. For me, concentered with Plato, I dream like him. O my dear countrymen, whom I have ſo often heard groan under that load of abuſes, of which we are wearied with complaining, when will our dreams be realiſed? Let us then ſleep on; for in that muſt we place our felicity.

* Was this world created merely for that ſmall number of men who now inhabit the ſurface of the earth? What are all the beings that ever exiſted, in compariſon of thoſe that God can create? Other generations will behold the ſame ſun, occupy the place we now poſſeſs, and puſh us ſo far back into antiquity, that there ſhall not remain of us either footſteps or remembrance.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

REFLECTIONS ON PARIS BY AN OLD ENGLISHMAN.

THOU troubleſome friend, why didſt thou wake me? Ah! what injury haſt thou done me! Thou haſt ſnatched me from a dream, whoſe ſweet illuſions were to me more deſireable than the importunate light of truth. How pleaſing was the deceit! Would that I were plunged in it for the remainder of my days! But, alas! I am again ſurrounded by that frightful chaos from which I thought myſelf delivered. Sit down, and liſten to me, while my mind is yet filled with the objects by which it was but now enrapt.

Late laſt night, I converſed with that old Engliſhman, whoſe ſoul is ſo free. You know that I love the man truly Engliſh; we no where find better friends; among no other people do we meet with men of a character ſo ſtedfaſt and ſo generous; that ſpirit of liberty with which they are animated gives them a degree of force and conſtancy rarely to be met with among other nations.

Your nation, he ſaid, is filled with abuſes ſtrange as multifarious; they are neither to be numbered or conceived; the mind is there loſt. Nothing is to

me ſo ſurpriſing as that repoſe, that apparent calm, which broods over the horrid jars of ſo many inteſtine troubles. Your capital is an incredible compound *; the hideous monſter is the receptacle of extreme opulence and exceſſive miſery; their conteſt is eternal. How amazing that this devouring body, which is conſuming in every part, can ſubſiſt in its horrid inequality †.

In your kingdom, all things are made ſubſervient to the capital; cities, nay, whole provinces, are ſacrificed to it. Alas! what is it but a diamond in the midſt of a dunghill! what an inconceivable jumble of ſenſe and ſtupidity, of genius and folly, of grandeur and baſeneſs! I left England with precipitation; I flew with hopes of arriving at that bright centre, where men, by uniting their mutual talents, had

* The whole kingdom is in Paris. France reſembles a ricketty child, whoſe juices ſeem only to encreaſe and nouriſh the head, while the body remains weak and emaciated. This ſort of children have frequently more wit than others; but they are generally ſhort lived.

† The manner in which it exiſts is ſtill more aſtoniſhing: It is not uncommon to ſee a man, who cannot live upon one hundred thouſand livres (¶) a year, borrow money of another, who lives at his eaſe on a hundredth part of the money.

(¶) The livre is equal to ten-pence halfpenny, conſequently the French crown of ſix livres is equal to five ſhillings and three-pence, and the louis-d'or of twenty four livres equal to our guinea.

had eſtabliſhed the throne of all the pleaſures, ſurrounded by eaſe and complacency. But, heavens! how cruelly were my hopes deſtroyed! On this ſpot, where all things abound, I behold wretches periſhing for want; in the midſt of ſo many ſagacious laws, a thouſand crimes are committed; among ſo many regulations of the police, all is diſorder; nothing to be ſeen but ſhackles, embarraſſments, and practices contrary to the public good.

The throngs of people are every moment in danger of being cruſhed by the innumerable quantity of carriages, in which are borne at their eaſe thoſe who are infinitely leſs valuable than they whom they ſplaſh, and threaten to deſtroy. I tremble when I hear the precipitate tread of horſes in the midſt of a crowd of the aged and infirm, of children, and teeming women. In reality, nothing is more inſulting to human nature than that cruel indifference, with which they regard the dangers that each moment produces*.

Your affairs compel you to frequent a quarter of the town, where there exhales a fœtid and mortal vapour: thouſands of mankind are forced to breath that poiſoned air †. Your churches afford more oc-

* Ye original inhabitants of the earth, could you have thought that a city would ever exiſt, where they ſhould, without concern, drive over the unfortunate paſſengers at ſo much per leg and per arm!

† The cemetry of the church called the Innocents, ſerves twenty-two pariſhes; they have interred the dead there

caſion for ſcandal than inſtruction; they are made the high road for paſſengers, and ſometimes ſomething worſe; you are not ſuffered to ſeat yourſelf there but by virtue of money; a ſhameful monopoly in a ſacred place, where all men, when in the preſence of the Supreme Being, ſhould ſurely be regarded as equals.

When you would copy after the Greeks and Romans, you have not even the ability to ſupport their manner, which was pure and noble; you diſfigure it, you deſtroy it, by a puerile longing after what you call pretty. You have ſome dramas that are maſter-pieces; but, if on reading them, I find a deſire to ſee them repreſented, I no longer know them. You have three ſmall, dark, and dirty theatres*; in one you are, at a great expence, magnificently ſtunned while you gapingly admire a heap of ridiculous machinery; in another, you are forced to laugh, when you

for a thouſand years paſt. A place for this purpoſe ſhould ſurely have been choſen without the walls; on the contrary, it is placed in the centre of the city; and leſt it ſhould not be ſufficiently frequented as it ſhould ſeem, they have ſurrounded it with ſhops. It is a grave always open, always filling, always empty. Our delicate ladies there walk over the mouldering bones of millions of their forefathers to purchaſe pompons and other baubles.

* The French and Italian comedies, or theatres, and the opera. The epithets here uſed are applicable enough to the two comedies; but ſurely the opera rather merits thoſe of grand and elegant.

you ſhould weep; nature is never conſulted; and beſides that your tragic actors are beneath all criticiſm, you there find ſome impertinent companion, who is alone ſufficient to baniſh the moſt perfect illuſion; with regard to the third, they are a ſet of buffoons; who ſometimes quaver the drolleries of Momus, and ſometimes ſhriek an inſipid air. I prefer theſe, however, to your dull French comedians, becauſe they are more natural, and conſequently more pleaſing, and becauſe they afford the public rather more entertainment*. But I muſt confeſs at the ſame time; that a man ought to have an uncommon ſhare of leiture, to amuſe himſelf with the wretched trifles they exhibit.

It affects me with an indignant pity, to ſee ſuch people as theſe, who are ſupported by a ſort of contribution from each ſpectator, impudently crowd their judges together in a ſcanty pit, where, continually on their feet, and preſſing againſt each other, they ſuffer a thouſand tortures; and where they are not permitted to complain, though on the point of being ſuffocated†. A people, who even in their entertainments,

* There is an eſſential difference between the French and Italian comedies; the firſt are fully perſuaded that they are perſons of merit, and in conſequence are inſolent; the ſecond are directed entirely by mercenary motives; the one, from ſelf-conceit, ſhew a want of due reſpect for the public; the others ſtrive to pleaſe it from a principle of avarice.

† There are no ſeats in the pit at any of the French theatres; and as thoſe that are behind are continually endeavouring to get forward, and thoſe before endeavour to keep their ſtation

can endure so troublesome a servitude, show to what degree of slavery they may be reduced. Thus, all those pleasures boasted of at a distance are, on a near approach, but troubles; and we must walk over the heads of the multitude, if we would breathe at our ease.

As I do not find myself endowed with that barbarous courage, adieu; I shall be gone. You may boast of your fine buildings that are falling into ruins; show with admiration your Louvre, whose aspect does you more disgrace than honour, especially when surrounded by so many gaudy baubles, which cost you more to support than it did to erect your public monuments.

But all this is yet nothing. If I should dwell on the horrible disproportion of fortunes; if I should explain the secret causes from whence it proceeds: if I were to describe your manners, without tender and polite, within haughty and cruel*; if I should paint the indigence of the unfortunate, and the impossibility of redress, while they preserve their probity;

station, they are in constant agitation, not much unlike the mob at a lord mayor's show: to mend the matter, there are six of the king's guards posted in the pit, three on each side; and if any one offers to cry out, one of the guards, if it be his will and pleasure, takes him immediately into custody.

* If we except the financiers, who are in general cruel and unpolite, the rest of the rich have but one of those two faults; they either politely suffer you to die of hunger or they roughly give you some relief.

bity; if I ſhould enumerate the riches a bad man has acquired, and the degrees of reſpect that is ſhown him, in proportion as he becomes more depraved*; —this would take up too much time. Good night. To-morrow will I leave you; I ſay, to-morrow; for I can no longer live in a city ſo full of miſery, and that has ſo many opportunities of preventing it.

I am diſguſted with Paris as with London. All great cities reſemble each other. Rouſſeau has very well ſaid, "It ſeems as if the more laws men make "for their happineſs, when united in one body, the "more depraved they become, and the more they "augment the ſum of their miſeries." One would, however, reaſonably imagine the contrary; but too many are intereſted in oppoſing the general good. I will ſearch out ſome village, where in a pure air, with tranquil pleaſures, I may deplore the lot of the wretched inhabitants of thoſe faſtuous priſons they call cities†.

It

* Formerly, though they did not aſſiſt the virtuous man, they, however, eſteemed him. It is now no longer ſo. I remember the reply of a princeſs to her intendant; his wages were ſix hundred livres, and he complained he was not ſufficiently paid. How then did your predeceſſor manage? ſaid the princeſs; he was but ten years in my ſervice, and retired with an eſtate of twenty thouſand livres a year. Madam, he robbed you, replied the intendant. Very well, ſays the princeſs, then do you rob me too.

† Amidſt the torrent of modes, projects, and amuſements, of which one deſtroys the other, and none laſts, the minds of the great are loſt, deprived of enjoyment, and become as incapable of perceiving the great and beautiful, as they are of producing it.

It was to little purpose that I reminded him of the old proverb, 'Paris was not built in a day;' that all was now perfection in comparison of past ages. Perhaps, a few years hence, I said, there will be nothing left for you to desire; if they shall accomplish, in their full extent, the different projects that have been proposed. Ah! he replied, there is the foible of your nation; projects for ever! And can you regard them? You are a Frenchman, my friend; and with all your good sense you have an attachment to the soil. But, be it so; when all those projects are accomplished, I will come again to see you; till then will I find another dwelling-place; I like not to inhabit amidst so many unhappy and discontented mortals, whose very suffering looks pierce my heart*.

I know that it would be easy to remedy the most pressing evils; but, believe me, they will never be remedied; the means are too simple to be regarded. I am convinced that they will avoid them; I am convinced also, that they will repeat amongst you the sacred word Humanity, with much affectation, only to avoid performing the duties it implies†. It is a long time since you erred through ignorance, and therefore you will never reform Adieu.

* There is no one establishment in France that does not tend to the detriment of the nation.

† Accursed be the writer who flatters the age in which he lives, and helps to deceive it; who lulls it with the history of its ancient heroes, and virtues that are no more; palliates the evils that undermine and devour it; and, like a subtle mountebank, talks of its florid complexion, while the gangrene

CHAP. II.

I AM SEVEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY YEARS OLD.

IT was midnight when my old Engliſhman left me. I began to be weary; I faſtened my door, and retired to reſt. When I had cloſed my eye-lids, I dreamed that ages had paſſed ſince I laid down to reſt, and that I was awake *. I roſe, and found a weight oppreſs me to which I was not accuſtomed; my hands trembled, and my feet ſtumbled; when I looked in the glaſs, I could ſcarce recollect my viſage; I went to bed with black hair and a florid complexion; but when I roſe, my forehead was furrowed with wrinkles, and my hair was white; I ſaw two prominent bones under my eyes and a long noſe; a colour pale and wan was ſpread over all my countenance; when I attempted to walk, I was forced to ſupport

grene is preying upon its members. The writer of fortitude will never avail himſelf of theſe dangerous deceits. He cries, O my countrymen, you by no means reſemble your fathers; you are polite and cruel; you have only the appearance of humanity; baſe and faithleſs, you have not even the courage to commit great crimes; yours are all mean and daſtardly, like yourſelves.

* When the mind is much affected with any object, it readily returns in ſleep. There are aſtoniſhing circumſtances attending dreams. This, as will appear by the ſequel, is not very extravagant.

ſupport myſelf by my cane; I did not find, however, that I had any ill-nature, the too common companion of old age.

As I went out, I ſaw a public place, which to me was unknown; they had juſt erected a pyramidal column, which attracted the regard of the curious. I advanced towards it, and read diſtinctly, The year of grace MMD. the characters were engraved on marble, in letters of gold. At firſt, I imagined that my eyes deceived me, or rather, that it was an error of the artiſt's; but I had ſcarce made the reflection, when the ſurpriſe became ſtill greater; for, directing my looks towards two or three edicts of the ſovereign fixed to the wall, which I have always been curious to read, I ſaw the ſame date, MMD. fairly printed on all of them. Ha! I ſaid to myſelf, I am then become old indeed, without perceiving it. What! have I ſlept ſeven hundred and thirty-two years*.

All things were changed; all thoſe places that were ſo well known to me preſented a different face, and appeared to be recently embelliſhed; I loſt myſelf amidſt grand and beautiful ſtreets, that were built in ſtraight lines; I entered a ſpacious ſquare, formed by the terminations of four ſtreets, where there reigned ſuch perfect order, that I found not the leaſt embarraſſment, nor heard any of thoſe confuſed and whimſical cries that formerly rent my ears; I ſaw no carriages ready to cruſh me; the gouty might have

* This work was begun in 1768.

have walked there commodiously; the city had an animated aſpect, but without trouble or confuſion.

I was ſo amazed, that I did not at firſt obſerve the paſſengers ſtop and regard me from head to foot with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment. They ſhrugged the ſhoulder and ſmiled, as we uſed to do, when we met a maſk; in fact, my dreſs might well appear original and groteſque, when compared with theirs.

A citizen (whom I after found to be a man of learning) approached me, and ſaid politely, but with a fixed gravity, "Good old man, to what purpoſe is this diſguiſe? Do you intend to remind us of the ridiculous cuſtoms of a whimſical age? We have no inclination to imitate them. Lay aſide this idle frolick." What mean you? I replied; I am not diſguiſed; I wear the ſame dreſs that I wore yeſterday; it is your columns and your edicts that counterfeit. You ſeem to acknowledge another ſovereign than Lewis XV. I know not what is your deſign; but I eſteem it dangerous; and ſo I tell you; maſquerades of this ſort are not be countenanced; men muſt not carry their folly to ſuch extent. You are, however, very free impoſtors; for you cannot imagine that any thing can convince a man againſt the evidence of his own mind.

Whether he thought that I was delirious, or that my great age made me dote, or whatever other ſuſpicion he might have, he aſked me in what year I was born. In 1740, I replied.—"Indeed! why then

you are seven hundred and sixty years of age. We should be astonished at nothing," he said to the crowd that surrounded me; "Enoch and Elias are not yet dead; Mathusalem and some others have lived nine hundred years; Nicolas Flamel traverses the earth like a wandering Jew; and perhaps this gentleman has found the immortal elixir, or the philosopher's stone." On pronouncing the last words he smiled; and every one pressed toward me with a very particular complacency and respect. They seemed all eager to interrogate me; but discretion held them mute; they contented themselves with saying, in a low voice, "A man of the age of Lewis XV. Oh! what a curiosity!"

CHAP. III.

I PURCHASE A SUIT OF READY-MADE CLOTHES.

I BEGAN to be anxious for my safety. The man of letters said to me, "I see you are confounded, and therefore willingly offer to be your guide. But let us begin, I entreat you, by entering the first cloth-shop we shall come to; for," he frankly added, "I cannot be your companion, if you are not decently dressed.

"You must allow, for example, that, in a well-regulated city, where the government forbids all duels, and answers for the life of every individual, it

it is uſeleſs, not to ſay indecent, to wear a murdering weapon by your ſide, to put a ſword on when you go to pray to God, or to viſit the ladies or your friends. A ſoldier can do no more in a town that is beſieged*. In your age, there were ſtill ſome remains of the Gothic chivalry; it was a mark of honour to wear at all times an offenſive weapon; and I have read, in an author of your days, that an old man would parade with a ſword that he could no longer uſe.

"How girding and troubleſome is your dreſs; your ſhoulders and arms are impriſoned; your body is preſſed together; your breaſt is conſtrained, you can ſcarce breathe; and, why, I beſeech you, do you expoſe your legs and thighs to the inclemency of the ſeaſons? Each age produces new modes; but either I am much deceived, or our dreſs is both agreeable and ſalutary. Obſerve it."

In fact, the manner in which he was dreſſed, though new to me, had nothing in it diſguſtful. His hat† had not the dark and gloomy colour, nor the troubleſome corners of our's; there remained

* In Paris, every man who is not a ſervant, or in trade, wears a ſword, if he can find money to purchaſe one, which he may do there for a few ſhillings.

† If I were to write a hiſtory of France, I ſhould pay a particular regard to the chapter of hats. This little ſubject, treated with care, would be curious and intereſting. I would contraſt the Engliſh and French; and ſhow, that

nothing but the cap or body of the hat, which was ſurrounded by a ſort of cape, that rolled up, or was extended, as the ſeaſon required.

His hair, neatly combed, formed a knot behind his head, and a ſlight tinge of powder left the natural colour viſible *. Far diſtant from the plaiſtered pyramid of ſcented pomatum; or thoſe ſtaring wings, that give a frightful aſpect to the wearer; or thoſe immoveable buckles, that deſtroy the grace of the flowing curls. His neck was not tightly bound with muſlin †; but ſurrounded with a cravat more or leſs warm, according to the ſeaſon. His arms enjoyed their full liberty in ſleeves moderately large; and his body, neatly encloſed in a ſort of veſt, was covered with a cloak, in form of a gown, ſalutary in the cold and rainy ſeaſons.

Round his waiſt he wore a long ſaſh that had a graceful look, and preſerved an equal warmth. He had

when the former wore a large, the latter wore a ſmall hat, and the reverſe.

* There are at preſent three or four hundred methods of dreſſing the hair of a man of faſhion. O, how profound are the arts! Who can pretend to purſue them through all their details!

† The neck-pieces that are now worn are of more ſervice than the ſuperficial obſerver may imagine. The town air, high living, and other matters, make us look pale. Now, thoſe necks, by driving the blood up into the face, reſtore us to a natural complexion.

had none of thoſe garters that bind the hams and reſtrain the circulation. He wore a long ſtocking, that reached from the foot to the waiſt; and an eaſy ſhoe, in form of a buſkin, incloſed his foot.

He carried me into a ſhop, where I was to change my dreſs: I ſat down in a chair; but it was not one of thoſe that are hard ſtuffed, and fatigue inſtead of refreſhing; it was a ſort of ſmall alcove, lined with mat, and turned on a pivot, according to the direction of the body. I could ſcarce think that I was in a tradeſman's ſhop; for it was quite light, and I heard no prating about honour and conſcience.

CHAP. IV.

*THE PORTERS OF PARIS**.

MY guide became every moment more familiar; he agreed for the price of my new dreſs, which came to a louis-d'or. When I gave it the ſhop-keeper, he promiſed to keep it as an antiquity. They paid ready money at every ſhop; for thoſe people, lovers of a ſcrupulous probity, knew not the meaning of the word *credit*, which, on one ſide or

* The porters of Paris carry their burdens in a long baſket ſtrapped over their ſhoulders, and reaches down to the waiſt; and of theſe there are near as many women as men.

the other ſerves as a veil to an induſtrious fraud. The art of contracting debts and not paying them was no longer the ſcience of the beau monde *.

When I came out, the crowd ſtill ſurrounded me; but there was nothing either jeering or inſulting in their behaviour; merely a buzz from every ſide; "That's the man who is ſeven hundred and ſixty years old. How unfortunate muſt he have been in the firſt part of his life †.

I was

* When Charles VII. king of France, was at Bourges, he ordered a pair of boots to be made for him. As they were trying on, his intendant entered, and ſaid to the ſhoemaker, 'Take away your boots; we cannot pay for them for ſome time; his majeſty can wear his old ones a month longer." The king commended the intendant; and he deſerved to have ſuch a man in his ſervice. What will ſome young rake ſay to this, who, while he is trying on his boots, laughs within himſelf, to think how he ſhall trick the poor workman. He deſpiſes the man whom he has defrauded, and ſpends the money in debauchery. It were happy, if the baſeneſs of his ſoul was imprinted on his front; on that front which bluſhes not, when he turns down the corner of each ſtreet to ſhun the eye of a creditor. I could wiſh, that every man in Paris, who was dreſſed beyond his ſtation, ſhould be obliged, under a ſevere penalty, to carry his tailor's receipt in his pocket.

† He who is in poſſeſſion of the ſubſidies and finances of a ſtate is deſpotic in the full extent of the term; and if he does not make all bend before him, it is becauſe it is not always for his intereſt to exert all his power.

I was aſtoniſhed to find ſo much elegance, and ſo little embarraſſment in the ſtreets. One would have ſaid it was the Fete-Dieu * The city, however, appeared to be extremely populous.

There was in each ſtreet a guard that preſerved the public order, and directed the courſe of the carriages, and of the porters; it took particular care to procure a free paſſage for the latter, whoſe burdens were proportioned to their ſtrength. You heard not here a wretch panting for breath, covered with ſweat, his eyes red with ſtraining, and his head bent down, groan under a load that would have charged a beaſt of burden, among a humane people; the rich were not permitted to ſport with humanity, by virtue of a few pieces of money; nor did you ſee the weak and delicate ſex, born to perform the ſoft and pleaſing duties of life, transformed into beaſts of burden; in the public markets, bending under weights to which their ſtrength was unequal, and accuſing the cruel inſenſibility of thoſe men who were the tranquil ſpectators of their labours. Reſtored to their proper ſtation, the women attended to thoſe duties only, which the Creator has enjoined them, to bear children, and be the conſolation of thoſe who protect them from the evils of life.

CHAP.

* This feaſt, which is in the month of June, is at Paris, the greateſt in the year; the ſhops are not only ſhut, but every houſe is hung with tapeſtry, from the firſt floor to the ground; all the ſtreets through which the ſeveral proceſſions paſs are ſwept and ſtrewed with flowers: and no carriages are ſuffered to paſs.

CHAP. V.

THE CARRIAGES.

I OBSERVED, that all who went took the right hand, and all who came the left *. This ſimple method of avoiding obſtruction has been lately diſcovered; ſo true it is, that all uſeful inventions are produced by time †. By this regulation all obſtructions are avoided, and every paſſage is left free. From the public feſtivals, where the greateſt concourſe of people reſort, to enjoy an entertainment of which they are naturally fond, and of which it would be unjuſt to deprive them, each one returns to his home without detriment or danger. I ſaw not there that ridiculous and turbulent ſight of an innumerable number of coaches entangled with each other, and the whole body remain immoveable for three hours together; while the gilded fop, the helpleſs wretch who ſuffers himſelf to be drawn along, forgetting that he has legs, cries out from the coach-window, and laments that he is not able to advance ‡.

The

* A ſtranger can by no means conceive what it is that in France occaſions a perpetual movement among the people, who, from morning to evening, are abſent from their houſes, frequently without any buſineſs, though in an incomprehenſible agitation.

† This method, I am informed, has been long uſed in the imperial city of Vienna.

‡ This droll ſight of a number of carriages intended for expedition, blocked up for a long time by each other, while the

The greateſt quantity of people form a circulation that is free, eaſy, and perfectly regular. I met a hundred carriages loaded with proviſions or moveables for one coach, and even in that there was only a man who appeared to be infirm. What are become, I ſaid, of thoſe carriages completely gilt, painted, and varniſhed, that in my time crowded the ſtreets of Paris? Have you then no farmers of taxes, no courtezans *, no petits maitres? Formerly thoſe three deſpicable tribes inſulted the public, and vied with each other in attracting the regard of the honeſt citizen, who fled with precipitation before them, leſt he ſhould be cruſhed by their chariot-wheels. The nobility of my days regarded the ſtreets of Paris as the liſts of the Olympic games, and placed their glory in the havock they made with their horſes; then it was, "let him ſave himſelf that can."

"Thoſe ſort of courſes," he replied, "are no longer permitted. Juſt ſumptuary laws have ſuppreſſed that barbarous luxury, which ſerved only to propagate a race of lackies and horſes †. The favourites

the maſters are fretting and the coachmen ſwearing, affords ſome ſatisfaction to the perſecuted foot paſſenger.

* We have ſeen a ſuperb carriage, drawn by ſix horſes, ſumptuouſly harneſſed, through two rows of wondering artiſans, who bare-headed ſaluted a—ſtrumpet.

† Thoſe expenſive ſots, who parade with a crowd of valets, have been juſtly compared to certain inſects, who, though they have many feet are remarkably ſlow in motion.

favourites of fortune no longer indulge in that criminal luxury so injurious to the poor. The nobles of our day use their own legs, and therefore have more money and less of the gout.

"You see, however, some coaches; they belong to ancient magistrates, or to men distinguished by by their services, and bending under the weight of years. It is permitted to them only to roll slowly over the pavement, where the lowest citizen is respected. Should one of these have the misfortune to lame any passenger, he would instantly descend from his coach, place the injured person in it, and at his own expence, provide him with a carriage for the remainder of his days. But this never happens; they who are permitted to have coaches are men of merit, who think it no disgrace to let their horses give place to a citizen.

"Our sovereign himself frequently goes on foot amongst us; sometimes he even honours our dwellings with his presence; and almost always, when tired with walking, rests himself in the shop of some artisan *; he loves to observe that natural equality which ought to reign among men; he meets in our eyes with nothing but love and gratitude; our acclamations proceed from the heart, and his heart receives them with complacency; he is a second Henry IV. he has the same dignity of soul, the same benevolence

* This was a frequent practice of the late Stanislaus king of Poland, in the latter part of his life.

benevolence of temper, the ſame noble ſimplicity; but he is more fortunate: the public ways receive from his footſteps a ſacred impreſſion that every one reveres; none dare breed riot; they are aſhamed to cauſe the leaſt diſorder. "If the king ſhould come by," they ſay; that ſole reflection would, I believe, ſtop a civil war. How powerful is example, when it proceeds from the firſt perſon in the nation! how does it affect! what command it has over all men! it becomes an inviolable law."

CHAP. VI.

THE EMBROIDERED HAT.

THINGS ſeem to me ſomewhat to be changed, I ſaid to my guide; I obſerve that every one is dreſſed in a ſimple modeſt manner; and in all our walk, I have not ſeen either gold clothes or laced ruffles. In my time, a puerile and deſtructive luxury had turned all their brains; a body without a ſoul was covered with lace; and the automaton then reſembled a man.—"That is the very reaſon which induced us to deſpiſe that ancient livery of pride; our eyes are not confined to the ſurface. When a man is known to excel in his art, he has no need of a rich habit, nor of magnificent apartments, to recommend him; he wants not admirers to extol him, or protectors to ſupport him; his actions ſpeak, and each citizen is deſirous that he ſhould receive the recompence

recompence of his merit; they who purſue the ſame career are the firſt to ſolicit in his favour; each one preſents a petition, in which the ſervices that he has rendered the ſtate are diſplayed in the ſtrongeſt colours.

"Our monarch fails not to invite to his court the man who is dear to his people; he endeavours to receive inſtruction from him; for he does not imagine that all knowledge was given him at his birth; he profits by the lucid inſtructions of him that has made ſome grand object the conſtant ſubject of his enquiry; he preſents that man with a hat, on which the wearers name is embroidered; and that diſtinction far outweighs thoſe ribbands, blue, red, and yellow, with which were formerly dreſſed up, men that were abſolutely unknown to their country*.

"You will readily believe, that an infamous character dare not preſent itſelf before a public that would immediately diſcover the deceit. Whoever bears one of theſe honourable hats has free acceſs to all places; at all times, he is admitted to the foot of the throne; that is a fundamental law: therefore, when

* The vanity of the ancients conſiſted in deriving their origin from the gods; ſome laboured to prove themſelves the nephews of Neptune, the grandſons of Venus, the couſin germans of Mars; others, more modeſt, contented themſelves with being deſcended from ſome river, nymph, or naiad. Our modern coxcombs have a more gloomy ambition; they would derive their deſcent from the depths of obſcurity.

when a prince or a duke has done nothing to obtain the embroidered hat, he enjoys his wealth but is entitled to no honours; he is regarded with the same indifference as an obscure citizen, who mixes and is lost in the crowd.

"Both policy and reason authorise this distinction; it can be displeasing to those only who find themselves incapable of ever attaining it. Man is not sufficiently perfect to do good merely for the sake of good. This sort of nobility, as you will easily believe, is personal only, not hereditary; nor is it venal. At the age of twenty-one, the son of an illustrious citizen presents himself before a tribunal, who determine whether she shall enjoy the prerogatives of his father. From his past conduct, and sometimes from the hopes that he gives, they confirm the honour that appertains to a citizen dear to his country; but if the son of Achilles be a base Thersites, we turn our eyes from him, that he may not have the shame of blushing before us; he descends into an oblivion, as deep as his father's glory was exalted.

"In your time, they punished vice, but they assigned no recompence to virtue; a very imperfect legislation. Among us, the man of courage, who has saved the life of a citizen*, who has prevented

D some

* It is astonishing that they allot no reward to the man who has saved the life of another, perhaps, at the risk of his own. An ordinance of the police gives ten crowns to the waterman who takes up a drowned body, but nothing to him who saves a citizen in imminent danger of drowning

ſome public calamity, who has performed ſome act of great utility, wears the embroidered hat, and his reſpectable name expoſed to the public view, gives him precedence to the man of wealth, though it were equal to that of Midas or Plutus*." That, I replied, is highly juſt. In my time, they gave, indeed, a red hat, which they fetched from beyond the ſeas; but it implied no merit in the wearer; it was a mere inſtance of ambition: and I know not well on what pretence they obtained it.

CHAP. VII.

THE BRIDGE RE-BAPTISED.

WHEN our converſation is intereſting, the length of the way becomes imperceptible. I no longer felt the weight of age, being quite re-juvenated by the ſight of ſo many new objects. But what did I diſcover! O heavens, what a proſpect! I found myſelf on the borders of the Seine, where my enchanted ſight beheld a long extent of the moſt beautiful buildings; the Louvre was finiſhed; and the

* When an extreme thirſt for wealth poſſeſſes every breaſt, the glow and ſpirit of virtue vaniſhes, and government can only reward by large premiums, thoſe who were formerly ſatisfied with titles of honour. Monarchs ſhould therefore create that ſpecies of wealth; but, as we ſaid, it will be current only while the minds of men are ſuſceptible of noble impreſſions.

the ſpace that was between that and the palace of the Thuilleries formed an immenſe place, where they celebrated the public ſhews; a new gallery correſponded to the old one of Perrault, which was ſtill beheld with admiration. Theſe two auguſt monuments, thus united, formed the moſt magnificent palace in the univerſe. All the artiſts of diſtinguiſhed merit reſided in this palace, and formed the moſt reſpectable part of the attendants of a monarch, who valued nothing ſo much as patronizing thoſe arts that gave birth to the glory and happineſs of his empire. I ſaw a ſuperb public place that was capable of containing the whole body of the citizens; a temple was in front; it was the temple of Juſtice; the architecture of that building correſponded with the dignity of the object.

Is that the Pont-Neuf? I cried. How it is decorated!—"What mean you by the Pont-Neuf? We have given it another name; and many others have we changed, to give them ſuch as were more appoſite or ſignificant; for nothing has a greater influence on the people than the uſe of juſt and expreſſive terms. Behold the bridge of Henry IV. As it forms a communication between the two parts of the city, it could not bear a more reſpectable title. In each of the ſemicircles, we have placed the ſtatues of thoſe great men, who, like him, were the friends of mankind, and fought nothing but the good of their country. We have not heſitated to place beſide him the chancellor L'Hopital, Sully, Jeannin, and Colbert. What a treatiſe on morality! What public lecture is

ſo eloquent, ſo perſuaſive, as this range of heroes, whoſe figures, though dumb, yet expreſſive, tell to every one how great and deſirable it is to obtain the public eſteem. Your age had not the glory to perform ſuch an action."—Alas! my age found the greateſt difficulties in the ſmalleſt enterprizes; they made the moſt extraordinary preparatives to announce with pomp an abortion; a grain of ſand ſtopped the movement of the moſt boaſted ſprings; in ſpeculation, they erected the moſt noble fabrics; the tongue and the pen ſeemed to be the univerſal inſtruments. All things have their time. Our age was that of innumerable projects; yours is that of execution. I congratulate you on your felicity, and rejoice to think that I have lived ſo long.

CHAP. VIII.

THE NEW PARIS.

ON turning my ſight toward that part where ſtood the bridge formerly called Pont-au-Change, I ſaw that it was no longer loaded with wretched hovels*; my view extended with pleaſure along the vaſt courſe

* The thouſands of men that reſort to the ſame ſpot, who dwell in houſes of ſeven ſtories, who crowd together in narrow ſtreets, who inceſſantly labour an exhauſted ſoil, while nature ſets before them a vaſt and pleaſant country, is an object in the eye of a philoſopher, highly aſtoniſhing.

The

courſe of the Seine, and the proſpect, ſtrictly regular, was further graced by novelty.

Theſe, indeed, are admirable improvements!—"'Tis true; yet 'tis pity, that they ſhould remind us of a fatal accident cauſed by your negligence."—How our negligence? if you pleaſe.—"Hiſtory relates that you talked perpetually of pulling down thoſe miſerable houſes, without performing it. On a certain day, therefore, when your magiſtrates preceded a ſumptuous feaſt with a fire-work, in order to commemorate the anniverſary of ſome ſaint, to whom, doubtleſs, France had great obligations; the firing of the cannon, the petards, and mines, overthrew the ruinated houſes built on thoſe old bridges; they tottered and fell on the wretched inhabitants; the fall of one was the ruin of another; a thouſand citizens periſhed; and the magiſtrates, to whom appertained the revenues of the houſes, curſed not only the fire-work, but the very feaſt.

"The ſucceeding years they made not ſo much noiſe about nothing; the money that ſprung up in the air, or cauſed dangerous indigeſtions, was employed

The rich repair thither to increaſe their power, and prevent an abuſe of their power by that power itſelf. The poor cheat, flatter, and ſet themſelves to ſale. They who do not ſucceed are hanged; the others become perſons of conſequence. It is eaſy to conceive, that in this perpetual and brutal conflict of intereſts, the duties of the man and of the citizen are ſcarce longer to be found.

ployed in forming a capital for the reſtoring and maintaining of bridges; they regretted the not having obſerved this method before; but it was the fate of your age to diſregard their follies, though enormous, till they were completely finiſhed.

"Let us walk, if you pleaſe, this way; you will ſee ſome demolitions that we have made, I think, not improperly. The two wings of the Quatre Nations* no longer ſpoil one of the fineſt quays, and perpetuate the vindictive temper of a cardinal. We have placed the town houſe oppoſite to the Louvre. When we give any public entertainment, we think juſtly that it is intended for the people; the place is ſpacious; no one is injured by the fire-works, or by the brutality of the ſoldiers, who, they ſay, in your time, (can it be believed?) ſometimes wounded the citizens, and wounded them with impunity †.

"You ſee that we have placed the ſtatue of the ſeveral kings that ſucceeded yours on the middle of each bridge. This range of monarchs, elevated without

* A college of that name, nearly oppoſite the Louvre, founded by cardinal Mazarine, for the education of ſixty pupils of four nations, which are Italy, Germany, Flanders, and Rouſſillon, a county in the Pyrenees, between Languedoc and Catalonia.

† This is what I have ſeen, and of which I here publicly accuſe the magiſtrates, who ought to be more ſolicitous for the life of one citizen than for twenty public fire-works.

out pomp, in the centre of Paris, affords a grand and intereſting proſpect over the river that adorns and refreſhes the city, and of which they appear to be the tutelary deities. Thus placed, like the good Henry IV. they have a more popular air than when incloſed in ſquares, where the eye is bounded*. Theſe, grand and natural, were erected without any great expence; our kings, after their deceaſe, did not impoſe that laſt tribute, which in your age oppreſſed the ſubject, already exhauſted."

I obſerve, with great ſatisfaction, that you have taken away the ſlaves that were chained to the feet of the ſtatues of our kings†; that you have obliterated every faſtuous inſcription‡; and though that groſs flattery is of all others the leaſt dangerous, you have carefully avoided even the appearance of falſehood and oſtentation.

They

* The houſes of the farmers of the public taxes, for the moſt part, encircle the ſtatues of our kings; ſo that they cannot, even after their death, avoid being ſurrounded by ſcoundrels.

† Lewis XIV. uſed to ſay, that of all the governments in the world, that of the Grand Turk pleaſed him moſt. A greater inſtance of pride and ignorance cannot be produced.

‡ This evidently refers to the outré ſtatue of Lewis XIV. in the Place des Victoires, and to the bombaſtic inſcription on the pedeſtal, which calls him, "the immortal man." It is but juſtice to the Pariſians to add, that they are in general diſguſted with the one and the other.

They tell me that the Baſtile has been totally demoliſhed by a prince who did not think himſelf a god among men, but held the Judge of kings in due reverence. They ſay, moreover, that on the ruins of that hideous caſtle (ſo properly called the Place of Vengeance, and of a royal vengeance) they have erected a temple to Clemency; that no citizen is ſnatched from ſociety, without his proceſs being firſt publicly made; that a lettre de cachet is a term unknown to the people, and ſerves only to exerciſe the curioſity of thoſe who buſy themſelves with inveſtigating the antiquated terms of barbarous ages. There had been, they added, a treatiſe compoſed, intitled, "A Parallel between a Lettre de Cachet and the Aſiatic Bow String."

We arrived inſenſibly at the Thuilleries, where every one was admitted; and it now appeared to me more charming than ever*. They made me no demand for a ſeat in that royal garden. We found ourſelves at the Place of Lewis XV. My guide, taking me by the hand, ſaid, with a ſmile, "You muſt have ſeen the inauguration of this equeſtrian ſtatue." —Yes; I was then young, and no leſs curious than at preſent.—"But, do you know," he ſaid, "that it is a chief-d'œuvre worthy of our age? We ſtill conſtantly admire it; and when we ſurvey the perſpective of the palace, it appears, eſpecially by the ſetting ſun, crowned

* To refuſe the common people an entrance into this garden ſeems to me a wanton inſult, and of a higher degree than is commonly imagined.

crowned by the moſt illuſtrious rays. Theſe magnificent viſtas form a happy encloſure; and he who projected the plan was, by no means, deſtitute of taſte; he had the ſagacity to foreſee the effect they would one day produce. I have read, however, that, in your day there were men as jealous as ignorant, who vented their cenſure againſt this ſtatue and place, which they ought to have admired *. If, at this time, there ſhould be a man ſtupid enough to utter ſuch abſurdities, he would certainly be treated with the higheſt contempt."

I continued my entertaining walk; but the detail would be too long: beſide, in recollecting a dream, ſomething is always loſt. The corner of every ſtreet preſented a beautiful fountain, from which there flowed a pure and limpid ſtream that fell into a ſhell, whoſe ſurface reſembled the beaten ſilver, and the tranſparency of the water invited the thirſty paſſengers to a ſalutary refreſhment. The clear ſtream that fell from the fountain, as it flowed through the ſtreets, plentifully waſhed the pavement.

"Behold the project of your M. Deſparcieux, member of the academy of ſciences, completely accompliſhed. See how every houſe is furniſhed with that

* It is only in France, that the art of keeping ſilence is not regarded as a merit. A Frenchman is not more eaſily known by his countenance and his accent than by the legerity with which he talks and determines on all ſubjects; he never knows how to ſay, "I underſtand nothing of that."

that which is of all things the moſt uſeful, the moſt neceſſary. What elegance to our dwellings, what refreſhment to the air, is derived from this ſingle circumſtance.

"We no longer erect thoſe dangerous chimnies which threatened to cruſh each paſſenger by their fall; our roofs have not that Gothic declivity, from which a guſt of wind could blow the tiles into the moſt frequented ſtreets."—We aſcended to the top of one of their houſes by a luminous ſtair-caſe. What a pleaſure was it to me, who love the free air and an extenſive proſpect, to find the tops of the houſes ornamented with pots of flowers, and covered with ſweet-ſcented arbours; the ſummit of each houſe offered ſuch a terras, and as they were all of an equal height, they formed together one vaſt and delightful garden; ſo that the whole city, when viewed from the top of ſome tower, appeared to be crowned with verdure, fruits, and flowers.

I need not tell you, that the Hotel Dieu was no longer incloſed in the centre of the city. If any ſtranger or citizen falls ſick, when diſtant from his country or his family, we do not, they ſaid, impriſon him as they did in your time, in a noiſome bed, between a corpſe and one expiring in agonies, to breathe the noxious vapours from the dead and the dying, and convert a ſimple indiſpoſition into a cruel diſeaſe. We have divided that hoſpital into twenty diſtinct houſes, which are placed at the different extremities of the city. By that means, the foul air which exhaled

haled from that horrid gulph * is diſperſed, and no longer dangerous to the capital. The ſick, moreover, are not driven to thoſe hoſpitals by extreme indigence; they do not go thither already ſtruck with the idea of death, and merely to ſecure an interment; but becauſe they there find more ready and efficacious ſuccour than in their own habitations. You there no longer ſee that horrid mixture, that ſhocking confuſion, which announced a place of vengeance rather than of charity. Each patient has a ſeparate bed, and can expire without reviling the human race. They have ſcrutinized the accounts of the directors. O ſhame! O grief! O incredible guilt! that men ſhould enrich themſelves with the ſubſtance of the poor, find happineſs in the miſeries of their fellow-creatures, drive a gainful bargain with death!—But no more; the time for theſe iniquities is paſt; the aſylum of the wretched is regarded as the temple where the Divinity pours his ſacred influence with the

* Six thouſand wretches are crowded together in the wards of the Hotel Dieu, where the air has no circulation. The arm of the river, which flows by it, receives all its filth, and abounds with the ſeeds of corruption, is drank by one half of the city. In that part of the river which waſhes the quay Pelletier, and between the two bridges, a great number of dyers pour in their dregs three times a week. I have ſeen the water retain a dingy hue for more than ſix hours after. The arch that compoſes the quay de Gevres is the ſink of peſtilence; the inhabitants of all that part of the town drink an infected water, and breathe empoiſoned air. The money that is ſo prodigally ſpent in fire works would be ſufficient to rid the city of this curſe.

the greateſt complacency; thoſe enormous abuſes are all corrected, and the poor ſick mortal has now nothing to encounter but his diſeaſe, and, oppreſſed by that alone, he ſuffers in ſilence *.

" Learned and humane phyſicians here aſſiduouſly examine each particular patient; not pronounce ſentence of death, by promiſcuouſly dictating general precepts. By their diſcerning and attentive conduct, health is ſoon reſtored. The phyſicians we rank among the moſt reſpectable of our citizens. In fact, what

* I have ſometimes walked with ſlow and ſolitary ſteps through the wards of the Hotel Dieu at Paris. What place more proper to meditate on the fate of man? I have ſeen there inhuman avarice decorated with the name of public charity; I have ſeen the dying crowded cloſer together than they ought to have been in the grave, precipitate the death of their miſerable companions; I have ſeen their pangs and their tears regarded with a general unconcern; the ſword of death ſtruck on the right and on the left, and not a ſigh was heard: one would have thought that they were killing beaſts in a ſlaughter houſe. I have ſeen men ſo hardened by this ſight, as to wonder that any one ſhould be affected. A few days after, I have been at the opera. What a profuſe amuſement! Decorations, actors, muſicians! an enormous expence to procure a pompous entertainment! What will poſterity ſay, when they ſhall be told that two ſo different places could ſubſiſt in the ſame city. How, alas! can they exiſt on the ſame ſpot? Does not the one neceſſarily exclude the other? A ſhort time after the royal academy of muſic overwhelmed my ſoul; the firſt ſtroke of the bow brought before my eyes the mournful bed of thoſe dying wretches.

what employment more amiable, more illuſtrious, more worthy of a virtuous and ſagacious being, than to preſerve the delicate thread of our days, by nature frail and fleeting, but by art rendered ſtrong and durable?"—But your general hoſpital, where is that ſituated?—"We have no general hoſpital *, no Bicetre†, no places of confinement, or rather diſtraction. A ſound body has no need of the cautery. Luxury, in your time, had gangrened the vital parts of your conſtitution; your political body was covered with ulcers; and, inſtead of gently healing thoſe ſhameful ſores, you added to them freſh malignity. You

* The Hoſpital General of Paris is a ſort of general work-houſe. It is ſaid to contain ten or eleven thouſand perſons.

† In the priſon of the Bicetre, there is a room called the Salle de Force, that is a type of the infernal regions. Six hundred wretches, crouded together, oppreſſed by their miſeries, by a foul air, by the vermin that devour them, by deſpair, and by a rancour ſtill more cruel, live in the fermentation of a ſtifled rage: it is the puniſhment of Mezentius a thouſand times multiplied (¶). The magiſtrates are deaf to the cries of theſe unhappy people. We have ſeen them murder their gaolers, the ſurgeons, the very prieſt that attended them, with the ſole view of being delivered from that place and expiring with more freedom on the ſcaffold. It has been juſtly remarked, that death would be a leſs barbarous puniſhment than what they ſuffer. O ye inhuman magiſtrates! iron-hearted wretches, unworthy the name of men! you offend againſt humanity

¶ Vide Virg. Æn. lib. viii. ver. 483.

You thought to have extinguished vice by cruelty; inhuman because you were incapable of forming just laws *.

"You found it more easy to torment the guilty and unfortunate than to prevent disorder and misery. Your barbarous violence has only served to harden the hearts of criminals, and to make them more desperate. And what have you gained by this conduct? Tears, distracted cries, and curses. You seem to have modelled your places of confinement after your idea

still more than those you punish! No band of ruffians in the midst of their ferocity, ever exercised cruelties like yours. Dare to seem still more inhuman, but execute more speedy justice; set fire to their prison, and burn them all alive; you will spare them the greater misery of attending your determinations in their horrible slavery: but, alas! you seem only anxious to protract it.

Might not each of these unhappy men, have a heavy weight fixed to his foot, and be sent to till the ground? No; they are the victims of an arbitrary power that you would conceal from every eye.—I understand you.

* Yes, magistrates, it is your ignorance, your idleness, and precipitation, that cause despair among the poor. You imprison a man for a mere trifle, and place him by the side of a miscreant: you corrupt, you poison his mind, and then leave him, forgot, amidst a herd of abandoned wretches; but he does not forget your injustice: as you observe no proportion between the crime and the punishment, he imitates your example, and all things become to him equal.

idea of that horrible dwelling you called the infernal regions, where the miniſters of vengeance accumulate tortures, for the horrid pleaſure of inflicting a laſting puniſhment on beings full of agony and imploring mercy.

"To conclude, for to enumerate all would take up too much time, you even knew not how to employ your beggars; the utmoſt diſcernment of your government conſiſted in ſhutting them up, and leaving them to periſh with hunger. Theſe wretches, who expired by a ſlow death in a corner of the kingdom, have notwithſtanding made us hear their groans; we have not been deaf to their obſcure complaints; they have pierced through a ſeries of ſeven ages; and your baſe tyranny in that inſtance has recalled a thouſand others."

I held down my head, and was unable to reply; for I had been a witneſs to theſe cruelties, which I could only lament, for more was not in my power *. After a ſhort ſilence, ſaid I, Ah! do not renew the wounds of my heart. God has avenged the evil they did to mankind; he has puniſhed the hardneſs of their hearts; you know—But let us purſue our walk. You have, I think, ſuffered one of our political evils to ſubſiſt: Paris appears to me as populous as in my time; and it was then proved, that the head

† I have ſatisfied my heart, and executed juſtice, in announcing this invaſion of humanity, this horrid outrage that will ſcarce be believed: but, alas! it nevertheleſs ſubſiſts.

was three times too large for the body.—"I am well pleased to inform you," replied my guide, "that the number of inhabitants in the kingdom is doubled; that all the lands are cultivated; and consequently the head bears now a just proportion to the members. This great city constantly produces as many men of the first rank, men of learning, of useful industry, and refined genius, as all the other cities of France together."—But one word more, of too much importance to be forgot: Do you place your magazines of powder in the centre of the city?—"We are far from that imprudence. Nature produces sufficient explosions. We need not construct those that are artificial, and would be a hundred times more dangerous *.

CHAP.

* There are magazines of powder in the centre of almost every town. The lightning, and a thousand other unforeseen, nay, unknown incidents, may blow them up. A thousand terrible examples (a thing scarce credible) have not been sufficient to correct even to this hour, the weakness of mankind. The loss of two thousand five hundred people, who perished in the ruins at Brescia, will perhaps render our governors attentive to an evil, which may justly be called the work of their hands, as it is in their power so easily to prevent it.

CHAP. IX.

THE PETITIONS.

I OBSERVED ſeveral officers, habited with the enſigns of their rank, who came to receive the complaints of the people, and make a faithful report of them to the chief magiſtrates. Every thing that regarded the adminiſtration of the police was treated with the greateſt diſpatch; juſtice was rendered to the injured; and every one bleſſed the adminiſtrators*. I poured forth my praiſes on this wiſe and prudent government. But, gentlemen, I ſaid, you are not entitled to all the glory of this inſtitution. In my days, the city began to be well governed. A vigilant police watched over every rank and all tranſactions. One of thoſe who maintained it in the greateſt order, deſerves to be named with eulogy amidſt you. We read, among his judicious ordinances, that for aboliſhing thoſe ridiculous and heavy ſigns which diſfigured the city, and endangered the paſſengers; that for completing, or rather inventing, of lamps; and for the admirable plan of a ſpeedy ſupply of water, by which the inhabitants have

* When a miniſter of ſtate, by his bad management, puts the monarchy in danger, or when a general ſheds the blood of the ſubjects to no purpoſe, and ſhamefully loſes a battle, his puniſhment is known; he is forbid to come into the monarch's preſence. Thus crimes that may ruin the nation are treated as mere trifles.

have been preſerved from thoſe fires which were formerly ſo frequent*.

"It is true," they replied, "that magiſtrate was indefatigable, and equal to the duties of his office, extenſive as they were. But the police had not then received its full perfection; ſpies were then the principal agents of a government weak, reſtleſs, and mutinous†. They were moreover very frequently employed in a criminal curioſity, rather than in what ſtrictly regarded the public utility; all their diſcoveries, ſo artfully procured, frequently produced nothing more than a falſe light that deceived the magiſtrate. What was worſe, this corps of informers, ſeduced by bribes, became a corrupted maſs that infected ſociety; all the pleaſures of converſation were baniſhed‡; men could no longer open their hearts

* If this author thinks the fires in Paris frequent, where there is ſcarce a houſe burned in a year, and where no one ever thought it worth while to erect an office of inſurance, what would he ſay to thoſe at London? In fact the French houſes are ſo conſtructed as not eaſily to be burned.

† The quantity of ſpies in Paris is incredible; beſides a great number who make it their ſole buſineſs, almoſt all that large corps, who by day clean ſhoes, and at night carry a falot, that is, a farthing candle in a paper lanthern, are of that honourable order.

‡ All ſuch frivolous and capricious regulations, all thoſe refinements in the police, can impoſe on them only who have never ſtudied the heart of man. Such rigid reſtrictions produce

hearts to each other; they were reduced to the cruel alternative of imprudence or hypocrisy. In vain did the soul struggle to express its ideas of patriotism; it dared not declare its sentiments; saw the snare that was spread, and pierced with grief, returned cold and solitary to its secret abode. In a word, men were then incessantly obliged to disguise their words, their looks, and actions. O! how distracting to the generous soul, who saw the monsters of his country smile while they preyed upon it; who saw, and dared not point them out*."

CHAP.

produce a hateful subordination, secured by bands on which very little dependence can be placed.

* We have not yet had a Juvenal. What age ever more deserved such a satirist? Juvenal was not a selfish wretch, like the flatterer Horace, or the insipid Boileau; he had a firm soul, that thoroughly detested vice, frankly declared war against it, and pursued it when sheltered under the purple. Who now dare assume that sublime and generous task? Who now has fortitude sufficient to render up his soul to truth, and say to his age, "I leave thee the testament that virtue hath dictated to me; read and blush: it is thus I bid thee farewell."

CHAP. X.

THE MAN WITH A MASK.

BUT, pray, who is that man that paſſes with a maſk on his face? How faſt he walks, or rather flies!—"It is an author that has wrote a bad book. When I ſay bad, I ſpeak not of the defects of judgment or ſtyle; an excellent work may be made by the aid of plain ſtrong ſenſe alone*; I only mean that he has publiſhed dangerous principles ſuch as are inconſiſtent with ſound morality, that univerſal morality which ſpeaks to every heart. By way of reparation, he wears a maſk, in order to hide his ſhame, till he has effaced it by writing ſomething more rational and beneficial to ſociety. He is daily viſited by two worthy citizens, who combat his erroneous opinions with the arms of eloquence and complacency, hear his objections, confute them, and will engage him to retract when he ſhall be convinced. Then he will be re-eſtabliſhed; he will even acquire from the confeſſion of his errors a greater glory; for what is more commendable than to abjure our faults†, and to embrace new lights with a noble ſincerity?"—But was his book well received?

* Nothing is more true; for even the homily of ſome country curate is of more ſolid utility, than a book artfully filled with truths and ſophiſms.

† All things are demonſtrative in theory; even error has its geometry.

received?—"What private perſon, I beſeech you, can dare to judge of a book againſt the opinion of the public? Who can ſay what can be the influence of a particular ſentiment in a particular circumſtance? Each author anſwers perſonally for what he writes, and never conceals his name. It is the public that marks him with diſgrace, if he oppoſe thoſe ſacred principles which ſerve as the baſis to the conduct and probity of man. He muſt of himſelf likewiſe ſupport any new truth that he advances, and that is proper to ſuppreſs ſome abuſe. In a word, the public voice is the ſole judge in theſe caſes; and it is to that alone regard is paid. Every author, as a public man, is to be judged by the general voice, and not by the caprice of a ſingle critic, who rarely has a deſcernment ſufficiently juſt, and knowledge ſufficiently extenſive, to determine, what will appear to the body of the people truly deſerving of praiſe or blame.

"It has been abundantly proved, that the liberty of the preſs is the true meaſure of the liberty of the people*. The one cannot be attacked without injury to the other. Our thoughts ought to be perfectly free; to bridle them, or ſtifle them in their ſanctuary, is the crime of leze humanity. What can I call my own, if my thoughts are not mine?"

In my time, I replied, men in power feared nothing ſo much as the pen of an able writer; their ſouls, proud and guilty, trembled in their inmoſt receſſes,

* This is equivalent to a mathematical demonſtration.

receſſes, when equity boldly plucked off the veil that covered their ſhame*. Therefore, inſtead of protecting that public cenſure, which, well adminſtered, would have been the ſtrongeſt check to vice and folly, they obliged all writings to paſs through a ſieve; and one which was ſo cloſe that frequently the moſt valuable parts were left behind. The flights of genius were in ſubjection to the cruel fetters of mediocrity, who clipt its wings without mercy†. They began to laugh. "It muſt have been a droll ſight," they ſaid, "to ſee men gravely employed in cutting a thought in two, and weighing of ſyllables. It is wonderful that you produced any thing good, when ſo ſhackled. How is it poſſible to dance with grace and eaſe, when loaded with heavy fetters?—Our beſt writers took the moſt natural means to ſhake them off. Fear debaſes the mind, and the man who is animated with the love of humanity ſhould have a noble

*In a drama, intitled The Marriage of a Kings Son, a miniſter of juſtice, a court ſcoundrel, ſays to his vaſe, ſpeaking of philoſophical writers, "This ſort of people are dangerous; we cannot countenance the leaſt act of injuſtice but they will remark it. It is in vain that we hide our faces under an artful maſk from the moſt diſcerning paſſenger. Theſe men have a manner of ſaying, *en paſſant*, I know you."—Meſſieurs Philoſophers, I hope you will learn that it is dangerous to know a man of my ſort. I will not be known by you.

†One half of thoſe they call royal cenſorers cannot be ranked among men of letters, not even thoſe of the loweſt claſs; for it may be literally ſaid of them, that they know not how to read.

noble and dauntleſs ſpirit. You may now write againſt all that offends you," they replied, "for we have no ſieves, nor ſheers, nor manacles; yet very few abſurdities are publiſhed, becauſe they would of themſelves periſh among their kindred dirt. Our government is far above all invective; it fears not the keeneſt pens; it would accuſe itſelf by fearing them. Its conduct is juſt and ſincere; we can only extol it; and when the intereſt of our country requires, every man, in his particular ſtation, becomes an author, without pretending to an excluſive right to that title."

CHAP. XI.

THE NEW TESTAMENTS.

O HEAVENS! What is it you tell me? All the world authors! Why your walls will catch fire like gunpowder, and blow into the air. Mercy on us! A whole nation of authors!—"Yes; but without ill-nature, pride or diſdain. Every man writes the thoughts that occur in his brighteſt moments; at a certain age, he collects the moſt judicious reflections that he has made in the courſe of his days; in his laſt years, he forms them into a book, greater or leſs according to his talent for reflection, and mode of expreſſion. This book is the ſoul of the deceaſed. On the day of his funeral, it is read aloud;

aloud; and that is his eulogy. Our children collect with reverence all the reflections of their forefathers, and meditate on them. These are our funeral urns; and seem to us more valuable than your sumptuous mausoleums, your tombs covered with wretched inscriptions, dictated by pride, and executed by baseness.

"We thus make it a duty to leave our descendants a faithful image of our lives. An honourable remembrance is the sole property that can remain to us on the earth*; and we do not neglect it. These immortal lessons that we leave our posterity make us still more beloved by them. Portraits and statues preserve the body's semblance only. Why not represent the soul, and the virtuous sentiments by which it was affected? They are multiplied by the animated expression that affection excites; the history of our thoughts and of our actions instruct our families; they learn, by the choice and comparison of thoughts, to improve their manner of thinking and judging. Observe, moreover, that the predominant writers, the men of genius, in every age, are the suns that attract the mass of ideas, and cause them to circulate. It is they that give the first movements; and as their generous hearts burn with the love of humanity, all other hearts obey that sublime and victorious voice, which has laid tyranny and superstition

* Cicero frequently asked himself what they would say of him after his death. The man who has no regard to reputation, will neglect the means of acquiring it.

ſtition in the duſt."—Gentlemen, permit me, I entreat you, to defend my age, at leaſt in thoſe points in which it deſerves commendation. We had, I think, amongſt us, ſome men of virtue and of genius. —"Yes, barbarians! but they were either diſregarded or perſecuted by you. We have thought ourſelves obliged to make an expiatory reparation to their offended names; we have erected their ſtatues in the public places, where they receive our homage as well as that of foreigners. Under the right foot of each is placed the ignoble head of ſome Zoilus or tyrant; under the buſkin of Corneille, for example, you will ſee the head of Richelieu*. Yes, there were in your time men of amazing talents; and we are unable to account for the fooliſh brutal rage of their perſecutors; they ſeem to have proportioned their rancour to the degree of ſublimity thoſe eagles attained; but they are conſigned to the opprobrium which deſerves to be their eternal inheritance."

On ſaying theſe words, he conducted me towards a place where the ſtatues of thoſe great men were erected. There I ſaw Corneille, Moliere, Fontaine, Monteſquieu, Rouſſeau*, Buffon, Voltaire, Mirabeau,

* I heartily wiſh the author had informed us on whoſe heads ſtood the feet of Rouſſeau, Voltaire, and others whoſe names are ranked with theſe. We ſhould certainly have heard of heads mitred and unmitred, in an uneaſy ſituation; but every one has his day.

† The author of Emilius is here meant, and not that frothy poet, void of Ideas, who had no other talent than

beau, &c. All these celebrated writers are then known to you?—"Their names form our children's alphabet; and when they attain the age of rationality, we put into their hands your famous Encyclopedic Dictionary, which we have carefully digested."—You surprise me! the Encyclopedia! an elementary book! O what a flight you must have taken toward the higher sciences! and how do I burn to receive instruction from you! Let me behold your treasures, and enjoy in one instant the accumulated labours of six glorious centuries.

CHAP. XII.

THE COLLEGE OF QUATRE NATIONS[*].

DO you teach your children Greek and Latin? In my time they tortured them with those languages. Do you consecrate ten years, the most precious and pleasing of their lives, in giving them a superficial tincture of two dead languages they will never speak?—"We know better how to employ their time. The Greek language is doubtless very venerable, on account of its antiquity; but we have Homer,

that of arranging words, and giving them a fictitious pomp, under which he hid the sterility of his invention, and the torpid state of his genius.

[*] See the note * on page 30.

Homer, Plato, and Sophocles perfectly tranſlated *, whatever ſome pedants may have ſaid of the impoſſibility of expreſſing their beauties. As to the Latin language, which, being more modern, muſt in conſequence be leſs excellent. It has died a natural death." —How is that?—"The French language has prevailed univerſally. They at firſt made ſuch finiſhed tranſlations as almoſt rendered it ſuperfluous to have recourſe to the originals; and they have ſince compoſed ſuch works as are worthy to efface thoſe of the ancients. Theſe new poems are incomparably more uſeful, and more intereſting to us, more relative to our manners, to our government, to our progreſs in philoſophical knowledge and in politics, and laſtly to that moral view of which we ſhould never loſe ſight. The two antiquated languages, of which we ſhall ſay more hereafter, are now uſed by a few learned men only. We read Livy almoſt in the ſame manner as we do the Alcoran."—I perceive the college, however, ſtill bears on its front, in large characters, *Ecole des Quatre Nations*.—"We have preſerved this building, and even its name, in order to apply it to better purpoſes. There are now four claſſes in this college, who

* Inſtead of giving us diſſertations on the head of Anubis, on Oſiris, and a thouſand uſeleſs rhapſodies, why do not the members of the Royal Academy of Inſcriptions employ their time in tranſlating the Greek authors, whom they pretend to underſtand ſo well? Demoſthenes is ſcarce known to us. That would be of more utility than to know what ſort of pins the Roman ladies wore in their head-dreſs, the form of their necklace, and whether the claſps of their gowns were round or oval.

who are taught Italian, Engliſh, German and Spaniſh. Enriched with the treaſures of theſe living languages, we do not in the leaſt envy the ancients. This laſt nation, which contained within itſelf the ſeeds of grandeur, that nothing could deſtroy, has been ſuddenly enlightened by one of thoſe powerful ſtrokes, that it is impoſſible to expect or foreſee; the revolution has been as ſudden as happy, becauſe the light fell at firſt on the head; whereas, in other ſtates, that has been almoſt always plunged in darkneſs.

Stupidity and pedantry are baniſhed from this college; and ſtrangers have been invited thither to facilitate the pronunciation of the languages there taught. The beſt authors in each of them have been tranſlated. From this mutual correſpondence maſſes of light have been reciprocally reflected. Another advantage ariſes from this, which is, that as the commerce of thoughts is extended, natural prejudices are inſenſibly extinguiſhed; men have been convinced that a few particular cuſtoms ought not to deſtroy that univerſal reaſon which ſpeaks from one end of the world to the other; and that their thoughts were in reality very near the ſame on thoſe ſubjects, that have occaſioned ſuch long and warm diſputes."—But what does the univerſity, that eldeſt daughter of our kings?—"She is become a caſt-off miſtreſs. That old maiden, after receiving the laſt ſighs of a faſtidious and affected language, would have paſſed it on the world for new, blooming, and enchanting. She tranſpoſed the periods, mangled the hemiſtics, and in a barbarous and ſlovenly jargon, pretended to revive the

the language of the Auguſtan age. It was at laſt perceived, that her diſcordant voice was near exhauſted, and that ſhe brought a yawning upon the court, the city, and eſpecially on her diſciples. By an arret of the French academy, ſhe was ordered to appear before their tribunal, to give an account of the good ſhe had done for the four laſt centuries; during which ſhe had been ſupported, honoured, and penſioned. She would have pleaded her cauſe in her ludicrous idiom, which certainly the Latins themſelves would never have underſtood; for of the French ſhe was totally ignorant; ſhe therefore dared not to hazard herſelf before her judges.

"The academy took pity on her embarraſſment; ſhe was charitably ordered to remain ſilent. They had afterwards the humanity to teach her the language of the nation; and from that time deſpoiled of her cowl, her crabbed looks, and her ferule, ſhe has applied herſelf ſolely to the teaching of that fine language, which the French academy is every day improving; and which, leſs timid, leſs ſcrupulous, corrects it, without always diminiſhing its force."—And the military academy, what is become of that?—"It has ſuffered the deſtiny of all the reſt of the colleges. It contained every other abuſe beſides thoſe that were peculiar to its inſtitution. Men are not made as they make ſoldiers."—Pardon me, if I treſpaſs on your indulgence; but this point is of too much importance to be abandoned. In my youth, they talked of nothing but education. Each pedant made his book, and well it was, if merely ſtupid. The beſt

of them all, the moſt ſimple, the moſt rational, and, at the ſame time, the moſt profound, was burned by the hands of the common hangman, and decried by thoſe who underſtood no more of it than that hangman's deputy. Inform me, I entreat you, what method you purſue in the forming of men?—"Men are rather formed by the wiſe lenity of our government than by any other inſtitution. But to confine ourſelves to the culture of the mind: while we familiarize our children with the letters, we bring them acquainted with the operations of algebra. That art is ſimple, of general utility, and not more difficult to learn than it is to read; even the ſhadow of difficulty has been removed; the algebraic characters no longer paſs among the vulgar for thoſe of magic*. We have found that this ſcience habituates the mind to conſider matters rigorouſly as they are: and that this mode of reaſoning is of the higheſt importance when applied to the ſciences.

They formerly taught youth a multiplicity of knowledge that in no degree conduced to the happineſs

* Soon after the art of printing was known at Paris, ſome one undertook to print Euclid's Elements. The workman employed, ſeeing it contain a number of ſquares, circles, triangles, &c. imagined that it was a book of ſorcery, intended for raiſing the devil, who, for ought he knew, might fetch him away in the midſt of his work; he therefore declined it; but his maſter inſiſted on his perſevering. The poor fellow, believing that they were determined on his deſtruction, was ſo terrified, that, deaf to reaſon and his confeſſor, he died of the fright a few days after.

nefs of life. We have ſelected thoſe objects only that will give them true and uſeful ideas; they were inſtructed univerſally in two dead languages, which were imagined to contain every ſort of ſcience, but which could not give them the leaſt idea of thoſe men with whom they were to live. We content ourſelves with teaching them the national language, and even permit them to modify it after their own taſte; for we do not wiſh to form grammarians, but men of eloquence. The ſtyle reſembles the man; and the man of genius ought to have a correſpondent idiom; very different from the nomenclature, the only reſource of weak minds, whoſe memories are treacherous.

We teach them little hiſtory, becauſe hiſtory is the diſgrace of humanity, every page being crowded with crimes and follies. God forbid that we ſhould ſet before their eyes ſuch examples of rapine and ambition. By the pedantry of hiſtory, kings have been raiſed to gods. We teach our children a logic more certain, and ideas more juſt. Thoſe frigid chronologiſts, thoſe nomenclatures of every age, all thoſe romantic or debaſed writers, who have been the firſt to bow down before their idols, are obliterated, together with the panegyriſts of the princes of the earth *. What! when the time is ſo ſhort and rapid, ſhall we employ our children in crowding their memories with a number

* From Pharamond to Henry IV. we can ſcarce name two kings, I will not ſay who knew how to reign, but who knew how to employ that good ſenſe in their adminiſtration that a private perſon obſerves in the œconomy of his family.

ber of names, of dates, of facts, and genealogical trees? What wretched trifling, when the vast fields of morality and physics lie open before us! It is to no purpose to say that history furnishes examples of instruction to succeeding ages; they are pernicious and infamous examples*, that serve merely to encourage arbitrary power, and to render it more haughty and more cruel, by shewing that men have in all ages bowed the neck like slaves; by exposing the fruitless efforts of liberty, expiring under the attacks of men who founded a modern tyranny on that of the ancients. If a man of an amiable, virtuous character arose, his contemporaries were monsters, by whom all his efforts were rendered abortive. This picture of virtue trampled under foot is doubtless very just; but at the same time, it is highly dangerous to be exposed. It is only for the man of determined resolution to behold such a representation without terror; and he feels a secret joy in reflecting on the transient triumph of vice, and the eternal reward that is the portion of virtue. But from children such pictures should be concealed; they should be made to contract a placid habit, with notions of order and equity, which should, so to speak, compose the substance

* The scene changes in history, it is true, but for the most part to introduce new evils; for kings are followed by an indissoluble chain of calamities. A monarch, on his advancement to the throne, thinks he does not reign, if he pursue the ancient plans; the old systems that have cost so much blood, must be abolished, and new ones established; these agree not with the former, and at the same time are not less prejudicial.

ſtance of their minds. We do not teach them an idle morality that conſiſts in frivolous queſtions, but one that is practicable and may be applied to all their actions, that ſpeaks by images, that forms their hearts to humanity, to courage, and to ſacrifice ſelf-intereſt, or, to ſay all in one word, to generoſity.

" We have a ſufficient contempt for metaphyſics, thoſe gloomy regions where every one erects a ſyſtem of chimeras, and always to no purpoſe. It is from thence they have drawn imperfect images of the divinity, have diſfigured his eſſence by refining on his attributes, and have confounded human reaſon by placing it on a ſlippery and moveable point, from whence it is continually ready to fall into doubt. It is by phyſics, that key to nature, that living and palpable ſcience, we are enabled to run through the labyrinth of this marvellous aſſemblage of beings, and to perceive the wiſdom and power of the Creator; that ſcience properly inveſtigated, delivers us from an infinity of errors, and the unformed maſs of prejudices give place to that pure light which it ſpreads over all objects.

" At a certain age we permit a young man to read the poets. Thoſe of the preſent day know how to unite wiſdom with enthuſiaſm; they do not deceive reaſon by a cadence and harmony of words, and find themſelves led, as it were againſt their inclination, into the falſe and the capricious; nor do they amuſe themſelves with dreſſing of puppets, with ſpinning of counters, or ſhaking the cap and bells. They are the

the recorders of thoſe great actions that illuſtrate humanity; their heroes are taken from all nations where are to be found courage and virtue; that falſe and venal clarion which vauntingly flattered the coloſſes of the earth, is totally deſtroyed. Poetry has preſerved that veridical trumpet only, which can reſound through a long ſeries of ages, becauſe it declares, ſo to ſay, the judgment of poſterity. Formed by ſuch models, our children acquire juſt ideas of true greatneſs; and the plow, the ſhuttle, and the hammer are become more brilliant objects than the ſceptre, the diadem, and the imperial robe."

CHAP. XIII.

WHERE IS THE SORBONNE?

IN what language then diſpute the doctors of the Sorbonne? Have they ſtill their ludicrous pride, their long gowns, and their furred hoods?—"There are now no diſputations at the Sorbonne; for ſince the French language has been every where uſed, that troop of wranglers has diſappeared. The roofs, thank heaven, no longer echo to barbarous terms, though ſtill leſs extravagant than the abſurdities they were intended to expreſs. We diſcovered that the ſeats on which theſe whimſical doctors ſat, were formed of a certain wood, whoſe baneful quality diſordered the beſt formed head, and taught it to ſophiſticate methodi-

methodically."—O! that I had been born in your age! Thoſe miſerable manufacturers of ſyllogiſms were the perſecutors of my younger days. I thought myſelf for a long time deſtitute of all ability, becauſe I could not underſtand their arguments. But what have you done with the palace erected by that cardinal* who made wretched verſes with enthuſiaſm, and cut off worthy heads with all the coolneſs poſſible?—"That large building contains ſeveral ſpacious apartments, where they now purſue a courſe of ſtudies far more uſeful to humanity. They there diſſect all ſorts of dead bodies; ſagacious anatomiſts ſearch in the receſſes of the dead, the means of diminiſhing the phyſical evils of the living. Inſtead of analyſing ridiculous propoſitions, they endeavour to diſcover the ſecret origin of thoſe maladies that torment us; and the deceaſed thus contribute to the good of their poſterity. Such are the doctors now honoured, ennobled, and penſioned by the ſtate. Surgery is moreover now united with phyſic, and the latter is no longer at variance with itſelf."

O happy prodigy! they talk of the animoſity of contending beauties, of the jealous fury of poets, and of the rancour of painters; but thoſe are tender paſſions in compariſon of that hatred which in my time inflamed

* O cruel Richlieu, thou rueful author of all our miſeries, how I hate thee! How doth thy name diſtract my ear! After having dethroned Lewis XIII. it was thou that eſtabliſhed an arbitrary power in France. Since that period this nation has never performed any great action; and what can be expected from a people of ſlaves?

inflamed the ſons of Eſculapius. We have ſeen more than once, as a certain droll expreſſed it, phyſic on the point of calling ſurgery to its aid.

"All is now changed; friends, and not rivals, they now form one body only; they afford each other mutual aſſiſtance, and their operations, thus united, ſometimes appear almoſt miraculous. The phyſician does not diſdain to practiſe himſelf the operations that he thinks neceſſary; when he preſcribes any remedies, he does not leave the care of preparing them to a ſubaltern, who, by negligence or ignorance might render them mortal; but judges with his own eyes of the quality, the quantity and manner of compounding them; a matter of the greateſt importance, as on that the cure abſolutely depends. The ſick man does not now ſee by his bedſide three practitioners who ludicrouſly contemn each other, diſpute, ſneer, and watch for ſome blunder of their rivals, with which they might divert themſelves at their leiſure. A phyſician is no longer a compound of the moſt oppoſite principles; the patient's ſtomach is not now the ſpot where the poiſons of the ſouth rencounter thoſe of the north; the beneficent juice of plants, natives of our ſoil, and adapted to our temperaments, diſſipate each noxious humour without deſtroying our entrails.

"This art is eſteemed above all others; for they have now baniſhed the ſyſtematic ſpirit and that blind rotation of practice, which was as deſtructive to mankind as the rapacity of kings and the cruelty of their

their miniſters."—I am charmed to hear that matters are thus; your phyſicians appear to me highly amiable, as they are no longer avaricious and cruel empirics, ſometimes addicted to a dangerous rotation of practice, and ſometimes, by making barbarous experiments, prolong the ſufferings of the ſick, whom they at laſt aſſaſſinate without remorſe. But, pray, to what floor will they go up?—"To every floor where there is any one in want of their aſſiſtance."—That's wonderful: in my time, the moſt eminent among them would never go higher than the firſt floor and as certain fine ladies admit no viſitors that do not wear laced ruffles, ſo they would cure no patients that did not keep an equipage. —"A phyſician among us, who ſhould be guilty of ſuch inhumanity, would ſtamp an indelible diſgrace on his character. Every one has a right to ſend for them; they ſeek only to reſtore health to the ſick; and if he be not able which is rarely the caſe, to offer a ſufficient gratuity, the ſtate then provides it. Every month a regiſter is made of the ſick that die or are cured; the names of the dead are always followed by thoſe of their phyſicians; and each one is to give an account of his preſcriptions, and juſtify his manner of treating the ſick. This detail is laborious; but the life of a man appears to us of too much importance to omit any means of preſerving it; and the phyſicians themſelves are intereſted in obſerving this ſagacious law.

"They have rendered their art more ſimple, and diveſted themſelves of many branches of ſcience that

are abſolutely foreign to the art of healing. You thought unjuſtly, that a phyſician's head ſhould contain every ſcience poſſible; that he ſhould be a complete maſter of anatomy, chemiſtry, botany and the mathematics; and though each of theſe arts require the whole life of a man, yet your phyſicians were in no eſteem unleſs they were beſides men of taſte, wit, and humour. Ours confine themſelves to a thorough knowledge of diſeaſes, to a critical diſcernment of of their ſeveral diviſions, and of the ſymptoms that attend them, and more particularly to the diſtinguiſhing of the temperaments in general, and that of each patient in particular. They uſe ſcarce any of thoſe remedies called precious, or of ſecret and myſterious compoſitions; they find a ſmall number of medicines ſufficient; they have diſcovered that nature acts uniformly in the vegetation of plants and in the nutrition of animals. Behold the gardener, they ſay; he is deſirous that the ſap, that is, the univerſal ſpirit, circulate equally in every part of the tree. The diſeaſes of the plant ariſe from the glutinous ſtate of that wonderful fluid. In like manner, all the diſorders that afflict the human race proceed from the coagulation of the blood and humours; reſtore them to their natural dilution, and as ſoon as the circulation attains its juſt courſe, health begins to be reſtored *. This being premiſed, there is no need of a very extenſive knowledge to attain theſe ends, for they

* This is not ſtrictly true; if it were, whenever the fluids were ſufficiently diluted, the body would be in health, which, unhappily, is by no means the caſe.

they preſent themſelves to us. We conſider all the odoriferous plants as univerſal remedies, ſeeing they abound in volatile ſalts, which are in the higheſt degree proper to dilute the viſcous blood. Theſe are the moſt precious gifts of nature for the preſervation of health. We adminiſter them to all the ſick, and have conſtantly found them to effect a cure *."

CHAP. XIV.

THE HOSPITAL FOR INOCULATION.

PRAY, tell me what building is that I ſee, which ſtands by itſelf, at a diſtance in the fields?—"It is the hoſpital for inoculation; a practice oppoſed in your days; as were all the good things, that were offered to you. You muſt have been egregiouſly obſtinate, when ſuch manifeſt and repeated experiments were not able to convince you for your own good. Had it not been for ſome ladies, more anxious for beauty than life, and ſome princes not very deſirous of reſigning their ſcepters into the hands of

* Though there is ſcarce any diſeaſe that may not be cured by the juice of plants, properly prepared, yet as the moſt efficacious remedies we know are obtained from minerals, it would be as extravagant totally to reject them as to exclude the others.

of Pinto, you would never have ventured on that happy diſcovery. Succeſs has fairly crowned it, the homely dames were obliged to remain ſilent, and they who had no diadems were nevertheleſs deſirous of remaining ſome time longer here below.

" Sooner or later truth will prevail over the moſt intractable ſpirits. We now practiſe inoculation, as they did in your time in China, Turkey and England. We are far from proſcribing ſalutary aids becauſe they are new; we have not, as you had, a rage for diſputation, merely for the ſake of making a figure in the eye of the public. Thanks to our induſtry, and to a ſpirit of inquiry, we have diſcovered many admirable ſecrets, which I have not now time to explain to you. A profound ſtudy of thoſe wonderful ſimples which you trod under foot, has taught us the art of curing the conſumption, the phthiſic, the dropſy, and other diſorders, which your remedies, of whoſe virtues you had little knowledge, commonly made worſe; the hygiena * eſpecially is ſo clearly inveſtigated, that each one is able to take care of his own health. We do not depend entirely on the phyſician, how ſkillful ſoever he may be. We apply ourſelves to the ſtudy of our own temperaments, and not leave it to be gueſſed at by a ſtranger on the firſt ſight. Temperance, moreover, that true reſtorative and conſervative elixir, contributes to form bodies healthful and vigorous, and that contain minds pure and ſtrong as their blood.

CHAP.

* The art of Preſerving health.

CHAP. XV.

THEOLOGY AND JURISPRUDENCE.

HAPPY mortals! you have then no theologians among you*? I see none of those mighty volumes that seemed to be the pillars of our libraries, those ponderous folios, that none but the printer, I should imagine, ever read. Theology, however, is a sublime science, and—"As our only contemplation on the Supreme Being is to praise and adore him in silence, without disputing on his divine attributes, which are for ever inscrutable, we have determined never more to write on that topic; so much too sublime for our intelligence. It is the soul that communicates with God, and it has no need of foreign aids to raise itself up to him†.

"All

* We should not here confound the moralists with the theologians; the former are the benefactors, the latter the opprobrium and scourge of mankind¶.

† Let us descend into ourselves, and ask our own minds, from whence they receive perception and thought? they will reveal to us their happy dependence; they will attest that Supreme intelligence, from which they are nothing more than feeble emanations. When the mind reflects on its own nature, it cannot divest itself of the idea of that God of whom it is the offspring and image; it cannot doubt of its heavenly origin. This is a truth of perception that has been common to all people. The man of sensibility will be

"All the volumes of theology, as well as those of jurisprudence, are confined by large bars of iron in the subteraneous apartments of the library; and if we should have a war with any neighbouring nation, instead of attacking them with our cannon, we shall send these pestiferous works among them: we preserve these volcanoes of inflammable matter merely for the destruction of our enemies, which they will certainly effect, by means of their subtle poisons, that seize at once the head and the heart."

To live without theology, I can easily enough conceive; but how without law, I can by no means comprehend.—"We have a jurisprudence; but different from yours, which was both Gothic and capricious. You still bore the marks of your ancient servitude; you adopted laws that were made neither for your customs nor your climate. As almost every individual became, by degrees, enlightened, they have reformed those abuses, that made of the sanctuary of justice a den of thieves. We are astonished how that foul monster, that destroyed the widow and the orphan, could triumph so long unpunished; nor can we conceive how it was possible for a pettifogger to pass the streets of the city without being stoned by those he had brought to desperation.

"The

struck with the prospect of nature, and without difficulty acknowledge a munificent God, who has in store for us other bounties. The man void of sensibility will not join to our praises the hymn of his admiration. The heart that never loved was that of the first atheist.

"The potent arm which bears the ſword of juſtice has ſmote that enormous body, but void of ſoul, in which were united the avidity of the wolf, the cunning of the fox, and the croaking of the raven, Their own ſubalterns, whom they made to periſh by famine and vexation were the firſt to reveal their iniquities, and to arm againſt them. Themis commanded, and the herd diſappeared. Such was the tragical end of thoſe rapacious vermin, who deſtroyed whole families by blotting of paper."

But in my time they pretended, that without their aid a conſiderable part of the citizens would remain idle at the tribunals, and that the courts of juſtice themſelves might poſſibly become the theatres of licence and diſorder.—"They were certainly the proprietors of ſtamped paper, who talked in that manner."—But how can cauſes be decided without the aid of attornies?—"O, our cauſes are decided in the beſt manner imaginable. We have reſerved the order of counſellors, who know the dignity and excellence of their inſtitution, and being ſtill more diſintereſted, they have become more reſpectable. It is they who take upon them to explain clearly and conciſely the cauſe of complaint, and that without vehemence or exaggeration. We do not now ſee a pleader, by labouring a tedious inſipid brief, though ſtuffed with invectives, heat himſelf to a degree that coſts him his life. The bad man can find no advocate among theſe defenders of equity; their honour is anſwerable for the cauſe they undertake; they oblige the guilty, by refuſing to defend them, to appear

pear trembling and endeavour to excuse themselves before a court where they have no advocate.

"Every man now enjoys the primitive right of pleading his own cause. They never suffer a process to have time sufficient to become perplexed; they are investigated and determined in their origin; the longest time that is allowed for the developing any cause, when it is obscure, is that of a year; the judges, moreover, never receive any presents; they became ashamed of that disgraceful privilege, by which, at first, they received but trifles, but, at last, exacted the most enormous sums*; they were sensible that they thereby gave examples of rapacity; and that if there be any case in which interest ought not to prevail, it is in that important and awful instance where man pronounces in the sacred name of justice."—I find that you have made amazing alterations in our laws.—"Your laws! Stop there. How could you give that title to an indigested mass of contradictory customs, to those old shattered papers that contained nothing but ideas without connection and grotesque precedencies? How could you adopt that barbarous mass, in which there was neither plan, nor validity, nor object; that consisted merely of a disgustful compilation, where genius and perseverance were absorbed in a noisome abyss? There have arisen

man

*It consisted at first of some boxes of sweet-meats; but now the boxes must be filled with pieces of gold; so dainty is the present taste of these august senators, and fathers of their country.

men of ability, of a love for the human race, and of courage ſufficient to induce them to undertake an entire reformation, and of that capricious maſs to form a regular and juſt body of laws.

"Our kings have given all their attention to this immenſe project, in which ſo many thouſands were intereſted. It has been acknowledged that legiſlation was the firſt of ſtudies. The names of Lycurgus, Solon, and thoſe who have followed their ſteps, are of all others the moſt reſpectable. The luminous point proceeded from the utmoſt north; and, as if nature would humble our pride, it was a woman who began that important revolution*.

"Juſtice has ſpoken by the voice of nature, ſovereign legiſlator, mother of virtue, and of all that is good upon the earth; founded on reaſon and humanity, her precepts are wiſe, clear, conciſe, and few. All general cauſes have been foreſeen and included in the laws. Particular caſes have been derived from them, as the branches that ſpring from a fertile trunk; and equity, more ſagacious than law itſelf, has applied practical juſtice to every event.

"Theſe new laws are above all things thrifty of human blood; the puniſhment is proportioned to the crime; we have diſcarded you captious interrogatories,

* They privately burned at Paris an entire impreſſion of the code of Catharine II. except a ſingle copy, that I by chance, ſaved from the flames.

tories, and the tortures of confession, worthy of the tribunal of the inquisition; and those horrid punishments calculated for a nation of cannibals. We do not put a robber to death, because we know that it would be injustice to murder him who has never murdered any one; all the riches on the earth is not equal to the life of a man; we punish him by the loss of his liberty; blood is rarely spilt; and when we are forced to shed it, as a terror to bad men, it is done with the greatest solemnity. A minister, for example, who abuses the confidence of his sovereign, by employing the power with which he is entrusted against the people, can find no pardon*. He does not, however, languish in a dungeon; the punishment attends the crime; and if a doubt arises, we chuse rather to shew him mercy than to run the horrid risk of keeping an innocent man longer in prison.

* A criminal, when seized, is exposed in fetters, that he may be a public and striking example of the vigilance of justice. Over the place of his confinement there continually remains a writing which explains the cause of it. We do not confine men, while

* A droll picture that of the rise of a minister. This is advanced to administration by means of a polite copy of verses; that, after having lighted the lamps, is preferred to command a fleet, and imagines that lamps and ships are to be trimmed in the same manner; another, while his father still holds the yard, governs the finances, &c. It seems as if there was a determination to put these only at the head of affairs who knew nothing of the matter.

while living, in the darkness of the tomb, a fruitless punishment, and more horrible than death itself! It is in the public eye our prisoners suffer the shame of their chastisement. Every citizen knows why this man is condemned to imprisonment, and that to labour at the public works. He whom three chastisements does not reform, is marked, not on the shoulder, but the forehead, and banished for ever from his country."

Inform me, I entreat you, about the lettres de cachet; what is become of that ready and infallible expedient, which cut short all difficulties, and was so convenient to pride, revenge and persecution?—"If you ask this question seriously," replied my guide, in a severe tone, "you offer an insult to our monarch, to the nation, and myself. The torture and the lettre de cachet* are ranked together, and only remain to polute the pages of your history."

CHAP.

* A citizen is suddenly snatched from his family, from his friends, and society; a piece of paper becomes an invincible thunder-bolt. An order for banishment or imprisonment is dispatched in the king's name, and proceeds merely from his will and pleasure; it has no other authenticity than the signature of a minister. Intendants and bishops have in their possession lettres de cachet, and have nothing to do but put in the name of any one they wish to destroy; the place is left vacant. We have seen the wretched grow old in prison, forgot by their persecutors, while the king has never been informed of their crime, of their misery, or even of their existence.

CHAP. XVI.

EXECUTION OF A CRIMINAL.

THE repeated mournful ſounds of a dreadful clarion ſuddenly ſtruck my ear, and ſeemed to murmur to the air the names of miſery and death; the drums of the city guard went ſlowly round, beating the alarm; and theſe ominous ſounds, repeated by the mind, filled it with a profound horror. I ſaw the citizens come forth with doleful aſpects; each one addreſſed his neighbour, and lifting his eyes to heaven, wept, and ſhowed all the tokens of the moſt piercing grief. I aſked one of them, why tolled the funeral bells, and what accident had happened?

"One that is moſt terrible," he replied, with a groan. "Juſtice this day is forced to condemn a citizen to loſe his life, of which he has rendered himſelf unworthy, by embruing his murdering hands in his brother's blood. More than thirty years have paſſed ſince the ſun beheld a crime like this. Before the day is finiſhed, he muſt expire. O, what tears have I ſhed for the fury that drove him to ſuch a blind vengeance! Have you heard the particulars of

It were to be wiſhed, that all the parliaments in the kingdom would unite againſt this monſtrous abuſe of power, and one that has no foundation in our laws. This important cauſe once agitated, would become that of the nation; and deſpotiſm would be deprived of its moſt formidable weapon.

of the crime that was committed the night before the laſt? O grief! is it not enough that we have loſt one worthy citizen; but muſt another ſuffer death?" —He ſighed bitterly.—"Hear, hear the ſtory of that direful event, which has ſpread over us an univerſal lamentation.

"One of our fellow-citizens, of a fiery diſpoſition, from his birth remarkable for paſſion, though otherwiſe a man of merit, was on the point of being married to a young woman whom he loved to diſtraction. Her temper was as gentle as that of her lover was impetuous; ſhe flattered herſelf, however with being able to ſoften his manners; but the many ſallies of wrath that eſcaped him, notwithſtanding all his care to conceal them, made her tremble for the direful conſequences that might proceed from a union with a man of his violent temper. Every woman, by our law, is abſolute miſtreſs of her perſon; ſhe therefore determined, from a fear of being miſerable, to marry another, who was of a character more conformable to her own. The torch of theſe nuptials ſet fire to the rage of an implacable heart, which in the tendereſt years had never known moderation. He gave many private challenges to his happy rival, who deſpiſed them; for he knew there was more bravery in diſdaining an inſult, and in ſtifling a reſentment, than in yielding to the impulſe of paſſion, in a manner that both our laws and reaſon proſcribe. The enraged man, liſtening to nothing but jealouſy, rencountered the other, the day before yeſterday, in a private path without the city, and on his refuſing again to combat with him, he ſeized a branch of a tree, and laid

him dead at his feet. After this horrid act, the inhuman wretch dared to come amongſt us; but his crime was already engraved on his front; we no ſooner ſaw him, than we diſcovered that he was criminal, though then ignorant of the nature of his offence. But ſoon we ſaw ſeveral citizens, their cheeks wet with tears, who bore, with ſolemn ſteps, to the foot of the throne of juſtice, the bloody corpſe that cried for vengeance.

"At the age of fourteen, they read to us the laws of our country. Every one is obliged to write them with his own hand, and to make oath that he will obſerve them*. Theſe laws command us to inform the police of all thoſe infractions that offend againſt the order of ſociety; but they intend theſe matters only that cauſe a real detriment. We renew this ſacred oath every ten years; and without being buſy informers, religiouſly watch over the preſervation of our venerable laws.

"Yeſterday they publiſhed the monitory, which is an act entirely civil. Whoever ſhould delay to declare

* It is ſcarce to be believed, that the moſt important of our laws, as well civil as criminal, are unknown to the greateſt part of the nation. It would be extremely eaſy to imprint them with a character of majeſty; but they are only publiſhed to thunder on the guilty, and not to excite the citizen to virtue. The ſacred code of the laws is wrote in a dry and barbarous language, and ſleeps among the duſt of the rolls. Would it not be proper to clothe it with the charms of eloquence, and by that means render it reſpectable to the multitude?

declare what he knew would be branded with infamy. By this means it is that homicide is ſoon diſcovered. None but a villain, for a long time familiarized with guilt, can coolly deny the crime he has juſt committed; and of this ſort of monſters our nation is purged; they no longer terrify us, but in the hiſtories of paſt ages.

"Obey, with me, the voice of juſtice, that calls all the people to be witneſs of its awful decrees. It is the day of its triumph; and, fatal as it is, we receive it with applauſe. You will not ſee a wretch who has been plunged for ſix months in a dungeon, his eyes dazzled by the light of the ſun, his bones broken by a previous and ſecret puniſhment more horrible than that he is going to ſuffer*, advance with hideous and dying looks, towards a ſcaffold erected in an obſcure nook. In your time, the criminal, judged in the ſecrecy of a priſon, was ſometimes broke on the wheel in the ſilence of the night, at the door of ſome ſleeping citizen; who waking with terror at the cries of

* Wretched is the ſtate that refines on its penal laws. Is not the puniſhment of death ſufficient; but muſt man add to its horror? Can he be called a magiſtrate who interrogates with torturing machines, and gradually cruſhes a wretch by a ſlow progreſſion of the moſt horrid pangs? who, ingenious in his tortures, ſtops death, when, gentle, and charitable, it advances to deliver the victim? Here nature revolts. But if you would be more fully convinced of the inutility of the torture, ſee the admirable Treatiſe on Crimes and Puniſhments. I defy any man to produce one ſolid reaſon in favour of that barbarous law.

of the excruciated wretch, was uncertain whether he was ſuffering under the iron bar of an executioner, or the ſword of an aſſaſſin. We have none of thoſe tortures that are ſhocking to nature; we have a regard to humanity even with them who have offended againſt it. In your age, they ſeemed not to be content with merely putting a man to death, ſo little effect the tragic ſcenes had upon you, all horrible as they were, and multiplied in cold blood. The guilty, far from being dragged along in a manner that is diſgraceful to juſtice, is not even fettered. Alas! why ſhould he be loaded with chains, when he freely delivers himſelf up to death? Juſtice has full power to condemn him to death, but not to charge him with marks of ſlavery. You will ſee him walk freely in the midſt of ſome ſoldiers, who ſurround him merely to keep off the multitude. We have no fear that he will a ſecond time diſgrace himſelf by endeavouring to fly from the terrible voice that accuſes him. Whither ſhould he fly? What country, what people would receive among them an aſſaſſin*? and how could he ever efface that horrid mark which the hand of the Divinity imprints on the front of a murderer; the tempeſt of remorſe is there painted in glaring characters; and the eye accuſtomed

* They ſay that Europe is civilized; and yet a man who has committed a murder, or made a fraudulent bankruptcy, can retire to London, Madrid, Liſbon, Vienna, &c. and there peaceably enjoy the fruits of his iniquity. Among ſo many puerile treaties, can they not ſtipulate, that the murderer ſhall no where find an aſylum? Is not every ſtate and every man intereſted in his puniſhment? But monarchs will as ſoon agree on the deſtruction of the Jeſuits.

accuſtomed to the aſpect of virtue will eaſily diſtinguiſh the phyſiognomy of guilt. How, in ſhort, can he ever be free who feels the immenſe weight that preſſes upon his heart?"

We arrived at a ſpacious place that ſurrounded the palace of juſtice. Along the front of the hall of audience there ran a large flight of ſteps. It was on this kind of amphitheatre that the ſenate aſſembled on public affairs, in the ſight of the people; it was under their inſpection that it choſe to tranſact the moſt important affairs of the nation; the numerous body of citizens there aſſembled inſpired them with ſentiments worthy of the auguſt concerns committed to their care. The death of a citizen was a calamity to the ſtate. The judges failed not to give their ſentence all that ſolemnity, all that importance it deſerved. The order of advocates were on one ſide, conſtantly ready to plead for the innocent, but ſilent in the cauſe of the guilty. On the other ſide, the prelate, accompanied by the paſtors, bare-headed, ſilently invoked the God of Mercy, and edified the people, ſpread in crowds over all the place*.

The

* Our form of juſtice does not command awe, but excites diſguſt. It is an odious and ſhocking ſight to ſee a man take off his laced hat, lay down his ſword on the ſcaffold, mount the ladder in a ſuit of ſilk or lace, and dance indecently on the body of the wretch that is hanging. Why not give the executioner that formidable aſpect he ought to ſhew? To what purpoſe is this cold barbarity? The laws thereby loſe their dignity, and the puniſhment its terror.

The criminal appeared; he was dreſſed in a bloody ſhirt; he beat his breaſt, and ſhewed all the marks of a ſincere repentance. His viſage, however, expreſſed nothing of that dreadful embarraſſment ſo unbecoming

The judge is ſtill more ſprucely powdered than the hangman. Shall I here declare the ſenſations that I have felt? I have trembled, not for the criminal's offence, but for the horrid unconcern of all thoſe that ſurrounded him. There has been none but that generous man who reconciled the unfortunate ſinner to the Supreme Being, who aſſiſted him in drinking the cup of death, that appeared to me to have any remains of humanity. Do we only wiſh to deſtroy mankind? Are we ignorant of the art of terrifying the imagination without violence to humanity? Learn at length, thoughtleſs and cruel men, learn to be judges, learn how to prevent crimes; conciliate what is owing to the law with what is owing to man. I have not the power to ſpeak here of thoſe artful tortures that ſome criminals have ſuffered, who ſeem to have been reſerved, ſo to ſay, for a privileged puniſhment. O diſgrace to my country! the eyes of that ſex which ſeems made for pity remained the longeſt fixed on that ſcene of horrors. Let us draw the curtain. What can I ſay to thoſe who underſtand me not?¶

¶ The author here evidently refers to what is improperly called the breaking on the wheel; for the criminal is ſtretched naked, except a cloth that goes round his waiſt, upon two planks, in the form of what is called St. Andrew's croſs; and then the executioner with an iron bar, breaks all the bones of his arms, his legs, and thighs. A cruel puniſhment, the reader will ſay; but it is trifling to what he has to ſuffer; for he is then laid, with his face upward, on a ſmall wheel, about as wide as the length of his body only, and is truſſed up like a fowl for the ſpit; his broken legs and thighs are brought back

becoming a man, who ought to know how to die when neceſſity calls, and eſpecially when he merits death. They made him paſs by a ſort of cage, where, they told me, the body of the murdered man was expoſed. On his near approach, he was ſeized with ſuch violent remorſe, that they ſuffered him to retire. He approached the judges, and put one knee to the ground, to kiſs the ſacred volume of the law. It was

back to his arms, and he is bound round with cords, hard as a merchant binds a bale of goods that is to go a long voyage, till the ropes cut into the fleſh, and thus left, with his head hanging backwards off the wheel, to expire by agonies; while the gay, polite Pariſians throng from every quarter to behold a ſight that is a diſgrace to their capital, to their country, and to mankind; and while the ſofter ſex, as the author ſays, gaze from the windows with inſatiable curioſity This puniſhment ſhews how ſtrong the powers of life are in ſome men; what tortures human nature is capable of ſuſtaining One would imagine that a man could live but a very ſhort time in ſuch a ſituation; but the wretch I ſaw, who was young, and of a vigorous conſtitution, was placed on the wheel about ſix in the evening; at four the next morning he complained of thirſt, and drink was given him; about an hour after he expired.

On reviſing this note, it occurred to me that the hard binding with ropes may be humanely intended to ſhorten the criminal's tortures by ſtopping the circulation; ſo when the executioner jumps on the ſhoulders of the man that is hanging he certainly intends, and does, in many inſtances, ſhorten his ſufferings. Doubtleſs too, a great part of the ſpectators are carried to theſe executions by a deſire to ſympathiſe in the criminal's ſufferings; as, when a ſhip is in diſtreſs, the fond mother flies to the ſea ſhore, and while ſhe ſtrains her infant to her breaſt, commiſerates their calamity, though utterly unable to relieve them.

was then opened to him, and they read, with a loud voice, the ſentence relative to homicides; they placed the book before him, that he might read it; he then fell on his knees, and confeſſed his guilt. The head of the ſenate, mounting a platform that was prepared for him, read his condemnation with a ſtrong and majeſtic voice. All the counſellors, as well as the advocates, who were ſtanding, then ſat down, by which they declared that no one of them would undertake his defence.

When the head of the ſenate had done reading, he deigned to ſtretch out his hand to the criminal, and raiſe him up; he then ſaid, "nothing now remains for you but to die with firmneſs, and obtain your pardon of God and of men. We do not hate you; we grieve for you, and your memory will not be held in deteſtation by us. Obey the law with cheerfulneſs, and revere its ſalutary rigour. Our tears bear witneſs that affection will take place in our hearts, when juſtice ſhall have accompliſhed her fatal decrees. Death is leſs dreadful than ignominy. Submit to the one, to avoid the other. It is ſtill in your power to chooſe. If you will live, you may; but it muſt be in diſgrace, and loaded with our indignation. You will behold the ſun conſtantly upbraiding you with having deprived your fellow-being of his genial and brilliant rays; to you they will be hateful, as they will only diſcover thoſe diſdainful looks with which all men regard an aſſaſſin. You will bear about with you every where the load of your remorſe, and the eternal ſhame of having refuſed to

ſubmit

ſubmit to that juſt law which has condemned you. Do juſtice to ſociety and condemn yourſelf *.

The criminal bowed his head; by which he declared that he judged himſelf deſerving of death †. He immediately prepared to ſubmit with conſtancy and with that reſignation which, in our laſt moments, is ſo highly becoming of humanity ‡. He was no longer regarded as guilty; the body of paſtors ſurrounded him; the prelate taking off the bloody ſhirt, clothed him in a white veſtment, which was the token of his reconciliation with mankind, and gave him

* They who are inveſted with a power that gives them authority over mankind ought to take great heed how they treat them merely according to their own demerits; they ſhould regard every criminal as a wretch more or leſs inſane; they ſhould therefore treat them as beings, who, by ſome unknown cauſe, have been led out of the right path. Even when the judge pronounces condemnation with majeſty, he ſhould ſecretly lament that he cannot ſcreen the criminal from puniſhment. To terrify vice by the moſt awful apparatus of juſtice, and privately to reclaim the guilty, ſhould be the two grand points of criminal juriſprudence.

† Propitious conſcience, thou equitable and ready judge, be never abſent from me! Tell me conſtantly that I cannot do the leaſt injury to another without receiving the counter-ſtroke; that I muſt neceſſarily wound myſelf, when I wound another.

‡ Ageſilaus ſeeing a malefactor endure puniſhment with unconcern, "O wicked man," he ſaid, "to make ſo bad a uſe of fortitude."

him the kiſs of peace. His friends and relations crowded to embrace him; he appeared ſatisfied by receiving their careſſes, and by being veſted with that garment which was a proof of the pardon he received from his country. Thoſe teſtimonies of friendſhip took from him the horrors of approaching death. The prelate, advancing towards the people, ſeized that moment to make a nervous and pathethic diſcourſe on the danger of paſſion; it was ſo eloquent, ſo juſt and affecting, that every heart was filled with admiration and terror. Each one reſolved to watch carefully over his temper and to ſtifle thoſe ſeeds of reſentment, which increaſe in a manner unknown to ourſelves, and ſoon produce the moſt unbridled paſſions.

During this interval, a deputy from the ſenate bore the ſentence of death to the monarch, that he might ſign it with his own hand; for no one could be put to death without his conſent, as in him reſided the power of the ſword. That good father would gladly have ſpared the life of the criminal*; but, in that moment he ſacrificed the earneſt deſire of his heart to the neceſſity of an exemplary juſtice.

The deputy returned. Then again the bells of the city began their funeral tolls, the drums repeated their

* I am ſorry that our kings have renounced that ancient and wiſe cuſtom. When they ſign ſo many papers why ſhould they neglect one of the moſt auguſt privileges of their crown?

their mournful march, and thoſe deploring ſounds meeting in the air with the groans of the numerous people one would have thought that the city was on the brink of an univerſal deſtruction. The friends and relations of the unfortunate man going to meet his death, gave him the laſt embrace; the prelate invoked with a loud voice, the forgiveneſs of the Supreme Being, and the vaulted roof of heaven reſounded with the ſupplications of the whole people, who cried, with one mighty voice, "*O Almighty God, receive his ſoul! O God of Mercy, forgive him, even as we forgive him!*"

They conducted him, with ſlow ſteps, to the cage I have mentioned, ſtill ſurrounded by his friends. Six fuſileers, their faces covered with crape, advanced; the head of the ſenate gave the ſignal, by holding up the book of the law; they fired and the ſoul diſappeared *. They took up the dead body. His crime being fully expiated by his puniſhment, he was again received into the claſs of citizens; his name, that had been effaced, was inſcribed again in the public regiſter, with the names of thoſe who had died the ſame day. This people had not the cruelty to purſue the memory of a man even to his tomb; and to reflect on a whole innocent family the crime of an individual;

* I have frequently heard it debated, whether the perſon of an executioner be infamous. I have always been concerned when they have given it in his favour, and could never have a reſpect for thoſe who ranked him with the claſs of other citizens. I may be wrong, but ſuch is my opinion.

individual*; they did not find pleaſure in diſhonouring, without a cauſe, uſeful citizens, and make men miſerable, for the ſatisfaction of making them humble. His body was carried to be burned without the city, with his fellow-citizens, who, the preceding day, had paid the inevitable debt to nature; his relations had no other grief to encounter than that which aroſe from the loſs of a friend. The ſame evening, a place of truſt and honour becoming vacant, the king conferred it on the brother of the criminal; and every one applauded a choice that was dictated by equity and beneficence.

With a heart full of tenderneſs and commiſeration, I ſaid, O, how is humanity reſpected among you! The death of a citizen is the cauſe of univerſal mourning to his country.—"It is becauſe our laws," they replied, "are wiſe and humane; they are calculated more for reformation than for chaſtiſement; the way to intimidate vice is not to render puniſhment common, but formidable; it is our ſtudy to prevent crimes; we ſend the refractory to places of ſolitude, where they are attended by thoſe who endeavour to bring them to repentance, who operate by degrees on their hardened hearts, and gradually diſplay the refined charms of virtue, to whoſe attractions the moſt depraved of mortals are not inſenſible. Does the phyſician at the firſt attack of a violent fever abandon

* Baſe and deſpicable prejudice, that confounds all notions of juſtice, is contrary to reaſon, and only calculated for a weak or wicked people.

abandon his patient? Why, therefore, should we desert the guilty who may yet be recovered? There are few hearts so corrupted, as not to be restored by perseverance; and a little blood properly poured forth, cements our tranquility and our happiness.

"Your penal laws were all made in favour of the rich; all fell on the head of the poor; gold was become the god of nations; edicts and gibbets surrounded all possessions; and tyranny, with sword in hand, bartered the days, the sweat and blood of the unfortunate; it made no distinction in chastisements, and thereby taught the people to make none in crimes; it punished the least offence as the most infamous villainy. What was the consequence? The multiplying of laws multiplied crimes, and the offenders became as inhuman as their judges. Legislation, when it attempted to unite the members of society, drew the bands so tight as to throw it into convulsions; and, instead of maintaining, destroyed the connections; mournful humanity sent forth the cry of grief, and saw too late, that the tortures of the executioner never inspire virtue *.

CHAP.

* When we examine the validity of that right which human societies have assumed of punishing with death, we are terrified at the imperceptible point which separates equity from injustice. It is to little purpose here that we accumulate arguments; all our lights serve but to lead us astray; we must return to the law of nature only, which has far more regard than our institutions, for the life of a man; that

CHAP. XVII.

NOT SO FAR OFF AS WE THOUGHT.

WE converſed a long time on this important ſubject; but as we became earneſtly engaged, and our debate wanted that ſerenity which is ſo neceſſary in an inquiry after truth, I thus bluntly interrupted my

that teaches us, that the law of retaliation is, of all others, the moſt conformable to right reaſon. Among riſing governments, which have yet the ſignature of nature, there is ſcarce any crime puniſhed with death. In the caſe of murder there is no doubt; for nature tells us that we ſhould arm ourſelves againſt aſſaſſins ¶; but in caſe of robbery, the inhumanity of inflicting death is notorious; it is a puniſhment that bears no proportion to the crime; and the voice of millions of men, worſhippers of gold, can never make that authentic, which is in its nature invalid. It will be ſaid, "The robber made a contract with me to be puniſhed with death if he invaded my property;" but no man has a right to make ſuch a contract, as it is unjuſt, barbarous, and ſenſeleſs; unjuſt, as his life is not his own; barbarous, as no proportion is obſerved; and ſenſeleſs, as it is incomparably more eligible that two men live, than that one of them ſhould enjoy ſome excluſive or ſuperfluous property.

This note, ſays the author, is taken from a good novel, intitled The Vicar of Wakefield.

¶ Notwithſtanding what is here ſaid, this poſition certainly admits of doubt, at leaſt. The ends of puniſhment are three; to redreſs the injured, to reform the offender, and to deter others.

my learned companion: Tell me, I beſeech you, what is become of the Moliniſts and Janſeniſts? He anſwered me with a loud burſt of laughter; I could get nothing elſe from him. But, pray, anſwer me, I ſaid; here ſtood the Capuchins, there the Cordeliers, a little farther on the Carmelites. What is become of thoſe frocked gentry, with their ſandals, their beards, and their diſciplines?

"We no longer fatten, in our ſtate," he replied, "a ſet of automatons, as troubleſome to themſelves as to others, who make a fooliſh vow never to be men, and hold no connection with thoſe that are. We thought them, however, more worthy of pity than reproach. Engaged from the moſt tender age, in a ſtate of which they were ignorant, it was the laws that were culpable, in permitting them blindly to proſtitute that liberty of which they knew not the value. Thoſe receluſe beings, whoſe manſions of retreat were erected with pomp in the midſt of a tumultuous city, perceived, and gave themſelves up by degrees to the charms of ſociety; when they beheld happy fathers, united brethren, and tranquil families, they regretted their not being able to participate

others Now, neither the murdered, nor his repreſentative, can receive any redreſs from the death of the offender; and with regard to the other two ends, I think it will appear, upon a cloſe inſpection, that there are many continued puniſhments, without having recourſe to barbarities, that would be far more efficacious We cannot be too cautious in depriving our fellow-creatures of that which God alone can give, and which, it ſeems to me, he alone has the right to take away.

cipate of that happineſs. They ſighed in ſecret over that fatal moment, when they abjured a life of all others the moſt pleaſing, and curſed each other like galley-ſlaves at the oar*; while they longed for the hour that ſhould open their priſon doors. It was not far diſtant; the yoke was thrown off without danger or difficulty; for the hour was then come: juſt as we ſee the ripe fruit fall from the branch by the leaſt touch†. Iſſuing forth in crowds, with the higheſt demonſtrations of joy, they became, all ſlaves as they had been, inſtantly men.

"Thoſe robuſt monks‡, in whom ſeemed to be revived the vigour of the priſtine ages of the world, their

* All thoſe religious houſes, where men are crowded together, teem with inteſtine wars; they are ſerpents that prey upon each other in obſcurity. A monk is a cold and moroſe animal; the ambition of advancing himſelf in his corps makes him ſelfiſh; he has leiſure ſufficient to reflect on his plan, and his concentered ambition has a gloomy turn; when he once gets the command, he is by nature rough and inexorable.

† In matters of public adminiſtration, there ſhould be no violent ſhock; nothing is more dangerous. Reaſon and time produce the greateſt events, and fix on them an indelible ſtamp.

‡ Luther, thundering with his fiery eloquence againſt the monaſtic vows, aſſerts, that it was as impoſſible to keep that of continence as to change our ſex¶.

¶ Luther, it is like, judged from himſelf. There are however, great numbers of men, who, from an ill-natured conſtitution, are under no ſort of temptation to break the vow of continence from women.

their fronts glowing with love and joy, espoused those panting doves, those sanctified virgins, who, under the monastic veil, had more than once sighed for a state less holy and more pleasing* ; they performed the devoirs of Hymen with an edifying fervour, and the

* What a cruel superstition, to confine in a sacred prison so many young beauties, who conceal all the fires permitted to their sex, which an eternal confinement redoubles, and even to the producing those conflicts they have with each other¶. To have a just sensation of all the miseries of a heart that devours itself, we should be in its place. Timid, credulous, abused, intoxicated by a pompous enthusiasm, a girl believes for a long time, that God and religion absorb all her thoughts; in the midst of the transports of her zeal, nature awakens in her heart that invincible, and to her unknown, power, and makes her submit to its imperious yoke. These fires, once lighted up, make havock among her senses; she burns in the calm of her retreat; she combats, but her constancy is overcome; she blushes and desires; she looks round her, and finds herself surrounded with insurmountable barriers, while all her being is carried with violence toward an ideal object, that her heated imagination has adorned with fresh charms. From that moment, adieu repose. She was born for a happy fertility; an eternal chain confines her, and condemns her to sterility and misery. She then discovers, that the law has deceived her;

¶ As this passage may appear obscure, and as I know not well how to make it more explicit, I shall here give the words of the original. "Quelle cruelle superstition enchaine dans une prison sacree tant des jeune beautés, qui recelent tous les feux permis a leu sexe, que redouble encore une clôiture eternelle, et jusqu' aux combats qu'elles se livrent."

produced an offspring worthy of so fair a lineage; their happy and rosy husbands were no longer solicitous for the canonization of some rotten bones; they contented themselves with being good fathers and good citizens; and, I firmly believe, are as likely to go to heaven after death, as if they had made a purgatory of the present life.

"It is true, that, at the time it happened, this reformation appeared to the bishop of Rome something extraordinary; but he soon had serious affairs of his own to manage."—Who do you call the bishop of R[illegible]?—"Him whom you called pope; but as I observed before, we have changed many Gothic terms; we no longer know what are canonicates, bulls, benefices, and bishoprics of an immense revenue*; we do not go to kiss the slipper of the successor of an apostle,

her; that the yoke which destroys liberty is not the yoke of God? and that the religion, to which she is irrevocably bound, is the enemy of nature and of reason. But to what purpose are her sorrows and complaints? Her tears and her sighs are lost in the silence of the night; the burning poison that ferments in her veins destroys her beauty, corrupts her blood, and leads her, with precipitate steps, to the grave; glad thither to descend, she opens herself the tomb, where all her griefs are lost in peaceful slumbers.

* I cannot see without horror, ecclesiastic princes, surrounded by all the pomp of luxury, smile disdainfully at public miseries, and presume to talk of morals and religion in their dull mandates, wrote by some curate's journeyman, and which insult common sense with scandalous effrontery.

apoſtle, to whom his maſter gave no other example than thoſe of humility; and as that apoſtle recommended poverty, as well by his example as his precept, we no longer ſend our pure gold ſo neceſſary to the ſtate, to purchaſe indulgences, of which that good magician was very liberal. All theſe matters gave him at firſt ſome diſguſt; for we do not love to part with our privileges, even though they be ſomewhat illegitimate; but he ſoon found that his true heritage was in heaven; that his kingdom was not of this world; and that all earthly riches were vanities, as are all things beneath the ſun.

"Time, whoſe inviſible and ſilent hand undermines the loftieſt towers, has laid that ſuperb and incredible monument of human credulity in the duſt*; it fell without tumult; its ſtrength was in opinion; opinion changed, and all exhaled in ſmoke. So we ſometimes behold nothing but a tranſient vapour, where late was ſeen a tremendous conflagration.

"A prince worthy to govern, rules over that part of Italy, and that ancient Rome has again beheld her Cæſars: by that word I refer to Titus and Marcus Aurelius, not to thoſe monſters who bore a human face. That fine country is reanimated ſince it has been cleanſed from thoſe lazy vermin that throve in filth.

* The mufti, among the Turks, extends his infallibility even to hiſtoric facts. He thought proper, in the reign of Amurat, to declare all thoſe heretics who did not believe that the ſultan went into Hungary.

filth. That kingdom now holds its proper rank, bears a lively and expreſſive aſpect, after having been wrapped up, for more than ſeventeen centuries, in ridiculous and ſuperſtitious rags, which ſtopped its breath, and deprived it of all power of utterance."

CHAP. XVIII.

THE MINISTERS OF PEACE.

PROCEED, thou charming inſtructor! This revolution, you ſay, was made in the moſt peaceful and happy manner.—"It was the work of philoſophy; it acted without noiſe, and, like nature, with a force the more certain, as it was inſenſible."—But I have many difficulties to propoſe; there muſt be a religion.—"Without doubt," he replied with warmth. "Alas! where is the man ſo ungrateful as to remain dumb in the midſt of the miracles of creation, under this brilliant firmament of heaven? We adore the Supreme Being; but the worſhip we render him cauſes no diſorder nor debate; we have but few miniſters, and they are wiſe, experienced, and friends to toleration; they are free from the ſpirit of faction, and therefore more beloved and reſpected; they are only ſolicitous to lift up pure hands toward the throne of the Father of mankind; they are beneficent to all, in imitation of God, abundant in goodneſs; the ſpirit of peace and concord animates their

their actions as well as their precepts; they are therefore universally beloved. We have, moreover, a holy prelate, who lives with his pastors, as with his brethren, and his equals. These functions are not assumed by any, till they are forty years of age; for not till then are the turbulent passions at rest; and reason, so slow in man, exerts its peaceful empire. Their exemplary life displays the highest degree of human virtue; it is they that comfort the afflicted; that point out to the unhappy a merciful God, who watches over them, and will one day recompence their sufferings. They search out poverty when concealed under the cloak of shame, and administer relief without compelling it to blush; they reconcile adverse tempers by the words of gentleness and peace; the most inveterate enemies embrace in their presence, and all the ulcers of their hearts become instantly healed. In a word, they fulfil all the duties of men who presume to speak in the name of an Eternal Master."

I am highly pleased to hear of ministers like those, I replied; but have you a set of men peculiarly consecrated to repeat at all hours of the day, with a nasal twang, canticles, psalms, and hymns? Does any one among you aspire to canonization? How do you celebrate that rite? Who are your saints?—"Our saints! You doubtless mean those who pursue the highest degree of perfection, who are elevated above human weakness. Yes; we have men of that celestial temper; but you will easily believe that they do not lead an obscure and solitary life; that they do

not

not make a merit of falling, of chanting bad Latin, or of remaining dumb and stupid all their days; it is in the sight of the world that they display the fortitude, the constancy of their souls; they charge themselves, by choice, with the most painful labours, and such as are disgustful to other men; they think that good and charitable works are to the Deity more grateful than prayer alone.

If men, for example, are wanting to clean the streets, or repair the highways, they undertake themselves; they undertake the most dangerous as well as the meanest employments, as to carry water through the flames to extinguish a fire, and walk over the burning planks; or to plunge into a river, to save the life of a man ready to perish, &c. These generous victims to the public good are filled, animated by an active spirit, by the grand and sublime idea of being useful members of society, and of alleviating the miseries of others. They make a duty of these occupations with as much pleasure as if they were perfectly easy and engaging; their motives are altogether directed by humanity and the love of their country, and never by self-interest. Some constantly attend the bed of the sick, and administer relief; while others descend into the mines, and perform all the laborious offices of those regions, so that you would take them to be slaves bowing under the iron yoke of some tyrant; but the design of their benevolent souls is to please the Eternal by serving their brethren. Insensible to present miseries, they look forward to that reward which God has in store for them,

them, as they do not sacrifice the pleasures of this world to a regard to any thing but to a real utility.

"It is [illegible] to tell you that we respect them [illegible] and as our [illegible] would be insufficient, we leave it to the Almighty to discharge [illegible] he alone [illegible] merited reward.

"Such are the men [illegible] we venerate, without [illegible] other motive than that they have extended human nature, of which they are the glory, [illegible] they perform no other miracles than [illegible] The martyrs to Christianity had certainly [illegible] it was doubtless very [illegible] the [illegible] of the [illegible] than [illegible] heart [illegible] But how much more the greatness [illegible] there in [illegible] the perpetual benefactors [illegible] him who, to dry up every tear, and [illegible] even the effusion of a single drop of blood *."

"These

* A courtier [illegible] in the last century, gave [illegible] to the poor, and [illegible] about begging for them. He met a [illegible] in the street; he attacked and [illegible] him, saying, "Give me something for my poor people, something for my poor people." The tax gatherer [illegible], and replied in the usual tone, "I have nothing for them. Sir, I have nothing for them." The counsellor

"These wonderful men do not offer their manner of living as a model to others; they do not glory in their heroism; they do not debase themselves to be exalted by the public; and least of all do they rail at the defects of their neighbours, but are much more solicitous to procure them happy lives by their innumerable labours. When one of these exalted souls rejoins that All-perfect Being, from whom it is emanation, we do not enclose the corpse in a metal still more worthless; we write the history of his life, and endeavour to imitate it at least in some degree."—The farther I advance, the more unexpected alterations I perceive.—"You will yet see many others. If a great number of pens did not attest the same matters, we should certainly call in doubt the history of your age. Was it possible? Could the servants of the altar be riotous, calabler-, persecutors? Could a set of miserable reptiles hate and persecute each other during the short space of their lives, because they chanced to think differently on certain vain subtilties, or matters that are by their nature incomprehensible? Those weak wretches, it seems, had the audacity to sound the designs of the Almighty, and to make them quadrate with their ignorance, their pride, and their folly.

"I have

counsellor would not quit him; he argued and entreated; he followed him quite to his hotel, and up to his apartment, continually interceding for his poor people. The brutal hoarder of millions, at last enraged, gave him a blow on the ear. "Very well," said the counsellor, "that is something for me and my poor people."

" I have read, that they who had the leaſt charity, and conſequently the leaſt religion, were they that preached to others; that the number of thoſe who bore that lucrative habit, the pledge of a continued idleneſs, was become incredible; and, to conclude, that they lived in an infamous celibacy *. They ſay, moreover, that your churches reſembled the public market-place; that they were equally offenſive to the ſight and the ſmell; and that your ceremonies were calculated rather to diſtract the mind, than to elevate it to God——But I hear the ſacred trump, whoſe pleaſing ſounds announce the hour of prayer. Come with me, and behold our religion; let us go to the neighbouring temple, and offer our thanks to the Creator, for having once more beheld the riſing ſun."

CHAP. XIX.

THE TEMPLE.

WE turned the corner of a ſtreet, and I perceived in the midſt of a ſpacious place a circular temple crowned with a magnificent dome. This edifice, ſupported by a ſingle range of columns, had four grand portals; on the front of each was written, *The Temple of God.* Time had already imprinted a venerable

* What a leproſy in a ſtate is a numerous clergy, that make a public profeſſion to know no wives but thoſe of other men!

venerable complexion on its walls, from which it received an additional majesty. When I arrived at the door of this temple, what was my surprise, to read the four following lines in large characters.

Loin de vein decider sur cet Etre Suprême
Gardons, en l'adorant, un silence profond;
Sa nature est immense et l'esprit s'y confond;
Pour savoir ce qu'il est, il faut etre lui-même.

In awful silence let us God adore,
Nor ever dare his nature to explore;
To search those boundless powers, by man were vain,
Which nought but boundless wisdom can explain.

O, by the way, I said in a low voice, you cannot assert that this is of your age.—"It is no commendation to yours," he replied, "for your theologians should have stopped there." This reply, which seems to have proceeded from the Divinity itself, has lain confounded among verses, of which very little account was made: I know, not, however, if there be any more excellent, for the sense they contain; and, I think, they are here very properly applied.

We followed the people, who, with thoughtful looks, and tranquil, modest steps, advanced toward the interior part of the temple. They all took their seats, in turn, on rows of stools; the men separate from the women. The altar was in the centre; it was totally unadorned, and each one could distinguish the priest who burned the incense. At the moment he pronounced the sacred hymns, the choir of

of aſſiſtants alternately elevated their voice; their ſweet and gentle ſounds expreſſed the awful ſentiments of their hearts; they ſeemed filled with the Divine Majeſty. There were no paintings, no ſtatues, no allegorical figures to be ſeen*; the ſacred name of God, a thouſand times repeated, and in different languages, was ſpread over all the walls; all declared the unity of the Godhead; all foreign ornaments were rigorouſly baniſhed; in a word, God alone poſſeſſed his temple.

When I lifted my eyes to the ſummit of this temple, I ſaw the face of heaven; for the dome was not covered with ſtone, but the cleareſt glaſs. Sometimes a ſerene and lucid ſky announced the complacency of the Creator: ſometimes dark clouds, that poured down in torrents, recalled to the mind the dark vale of life, and told us that this dull earth is but a place of exile; the thunder announced, how terrible is God, when offended; and the calm that ſucceeded to the flaſhing lightnings declared, that contrition unarms his avenging hand; but when the breath of ſpring poured down its balmy ſtreams, then every heart was impreſſed with that ſalutary and comfortable truth, that the treaſures of the divine clemency are inexhauſtible. Thus the ſeaſons and the elements, whoſe voice is ſo eloquent to thoſe who can comprehend it, ſpoke to this diſcerning people,

* The Proteſtants are in the right; all thoſe works of men diſpoſe the people to idolatry. To expreſs an inviſible and preſent Deity, the temple ſhould contain him alone.

and displayed to them the Author of the universe under all his various relations *.

There were here no discordant sounds; even the voice of the infant was taught to join the majestic choir; there was no profane or frisky music; the organ alone, which was far from being clamorous, was accompanied by the voice of the numerous people, and seemed the song of immortals, who joined these public orisons; no one entered or went out during the time of prayer; no burly Swiss, no troublesome beggar, interrupted the adoration of the faithful supplicants; the whole people were struck with a religious and profound awe; many lay prostrate, their faces against the earth. In the midst of this universal silent meditation, I was seized with a sacred terror; it seemed as if the Divinity had descended into the temple and filled it with his invisible presence.

There were boxes to receive alms; but they were placed in obscure nooks. This people could perform acts of charity without ostentation. During the time of adoration, the silence was so religiously observed, that the sanctity of the place, joined to the idea of the Supreme Being, pierced every heart with a profound and affecting impression.

The

* A savage wandering through the woods, contemplating heaven and earth, and discovering, so to say, the only Master that he knows, comes nearer to the true religion than the Carthusian, buried in his cell, and conversing with none but the phantoms of a heated imagination.

The exhortation of the paſtor to his flock was ſimple, natural, and eloquent; but more from the matter than the ſtyle. He talked of God only to make him beloved by men, and to recommend humanity, gentleneſs, and patience; he did not endeavour to diſplay his wit, when it was his buſineſs to affect the heart; it was a father that converſed with his children on thoſe matters that were moſt eligible for them to purſue. Theſe precepts had the greater effect, as they proceeded from the mouth of a man whoſe character was perfectly amiable. I could never have been tired; for this diſcourſe conſiſted not of pompous declamation, or vague characters, or far-fetched figures, and ſtill leſs of ſcraps of poetry mixed with the proſe, by which it commonly becomes yet more inſipid *.

"It is thus," ſaid my guide, "that every morning we make a public prayer; it laſts an hour, and the reſt of the day the doors remain ſhut. We have ſcarce any religious feaſts; but we have thoſe that are civil, which relax the people without making them

* What, in our preachers, gives me the greateſt diſguſt, is, that they have no fixed principle with regard to morals; they draw their ideas from their text, and not from the heart. To-day they are moderate and rational; to-morrow perſecutors and enthuſiaſts. They offer nothing but words; and it is of little concern to them whether they contradict themſelves or not, provided they make out their three points. I have heard one of them pillage the Encyclopedia, and declaim againſt the encyclopediaſts.

them licentious. On no day ſhould man remain idle; by the example of nature, which never quits its operations, he ought never to reproach himſelf with having been quite inactive. Repoſe, however, is not idleneſs. Total inaction is a real damage to our country; and ceſſation from labour is in fact a diminutive of death. The time determined for prayer is ſufficient to elevate the mind to God; long offices produce inattention and diſguſt; and all private prayers have leſs merit than thoſe that excite the public devotion.

"Let me recite to you the form of prayer uſed among us. Every one repeats it, and meditates on every ſentiment it contains.

"Thou one, uncreated Being! the wiſe Creator of this vaſt univerſe! ſince thy goodneſs hath preſented it as a ſpectacle to man, ſince ſo weak a creature hath received from thee the precious gift of reflecting on this great and beautiful work, ſuffer not, that after the manner of the brute, he paſs over the ſurface of this globe, without rendering homage to thy omnipotence and thy wiſdom. We extol thy glorious works; we bleſs thy ſovereign hand; we adore thee as our Judge; but we love thee as the univerſal Father of beings. Yes, thy goodneſs is equal to thy power; all things declare it; but, above all, our own hearts. If ſome tranſient evils here afflict us, is is, doubtleſs, becauſe they are inevitable; moreover, it is thy pleaſure, and that is to us ſufficient;

we ſubmit with confidence, and rely on thy infinite goodneſs, far from complaining, we offer up our thanks for thy having created us to know thee.

"May every one adore thee after his own manner, according to the moſt affectionate, and moſt animated dictates of his heart. We do not wiſh to ſet bounds to his zeal. Thou haſt deigned to ſpeak to us by the voice of nature only; all our devotion is confined to the adoring of thee, in bleſſing thy name, in crying toward thy throne, that we are weak, miſerable, limited creatures, and have for ever need of thy ſupporting arm.

"If we deceive ourſelves, if any other worſhip, ancient or modern, is more pleaſing in thy ſight than ours, O vouchſafe to open our eyes, and diſſipate the clouds that hang over our minds; we will faithfully obey thy precepts. But if thou art ſatisfied with this feeble homage, which we know to be due to thy power, and to thy truly paternal tenderneſs; give us the conſtancy to perſevere in theſe ſentiments of adoration with which we are inflamed. Preſerver of human kind! thou, who with thy complacent regards embraceſt the whole human race, grant that charity may, in like manner, embrace the hearts of all the inhabitants of this earth, that they may all love like brethren, and pour forth to thee one ſong of love, adoration and thanſgiving!

"We do not preſume to pray for long life; whether thou takeſt us from this earth, or permitteſt us here

to

to remain, we ſhall never be abſent from thy ſight; we aſk for virtue only, leſt we ſhould offend againſt thy impenetrable decrees; but humble and totally reſigned to thy will, vouchſafe, whether we paſs by a gentle or painful death, vouchſafe to draw us toward thee, the ſource of eternal happineſs. Our hearts pant after thy preſence. May this mortal veſtment fall off, and may we fly to behold thy glory! What we now ſee of thy greatneſs makes us long for a more extenſive proſpect. Thou haſt done too much for man to refuſe freedom to his thoughts; he therefore offers up his ardent vows to thee, becauſe, as thy creature, he knows himſelf born to receive thy favours."

But, my dear Sir, I ſaid, your religion if you will permit me to declare it, is, in a manner, the ſame with that of the ancient patriarchs, who adored God in ſpirit and in truth, on the tops of the mountains. —"Right; you have juſtly expreſſed it; our religion is that of Enoch, of Elias, and Adam, and therefore, is at leaſt the moſt ancient. It is with religion as with laws; the moſt ſimple are the beſt. Adore God, love thy neighbour; hearken to that conſcience, that judge which continually attends thee; never ſtifle that ſecret and celeſtial voice; all the reſt is impoſture, fraud, falſhood*. Our prieſts do not pretend to a particular inſpiration from God; they call themſelves our equals; they acknowledge, that, like

* Our Author cannot refrain from reflecting on the impoſtures of the Romiſh church.

like us, they walk in darkneſs; they follow, however, that luminous point which God hath been pleaſed to ſet before us, and ſhew it to their brethren without deſpotiſm, and without oſtentation. Cheriſh a pure morality, free from dogmatic principles, and you will baniſh atheiſm, fanaticiſm, and ſuperſtition. We have found this happy method, for which we return our ſincere thanks to the Author of every good."

You adore a God; but do you admit of the immortality of the ſoul? What is your opinion of that great and impenetrable ſecret? All philoſophers have endeavoured to reſolve it; the wiſe man and the fool have paſſed their judgment; ſyſtems the moſt diverſified, the moſt poetic, have been erected on that famous doctrine; it ſeems above all things to have excited the attention of legiſlators. What is the opinion of your age concerning it?

"We need but look round us," he replied, "to know that there is a God; we need but look into ourſelves to know that there is ſomething within us, which lives, which perceives, which thinks, which wills, and determines. We believe that the ſoul is diſtinct from matter, that it is intelligent by its nature. We reaſon but little on this ſubject; we love to believe all that elevates human nature; the ſyſtem which exalts it moſt is to us the moſt pleaſing; and we cannot think that ideas which do honour to the creatures of the Almighty God can ever be falſe. To adopt the moſt ſublime plan is not to deceive ourſelves, but to attain the true end. Incredulity is nothing but

weakneſs,

weakneſs, and boldneſs of thought is the faith of an intelligent being. Why ſhould we creep towards inanity, when we find that we have wings by which we can aſcend to the Moſt High, and when there is nothing which contradicts that noble daring. If it were poſſible that we could deceive ourſelves, man would have conceived of an order of things more excellent than that which exiſts; the ſovereign power would then become limited, I had almoſt ſaid his goodneſs.

"We believe that all ſouls are equal by their eſſence, but different by their qualities. The ſoul of a man and that of a brute are equally immaterial; but one has advanced a ſtep farther than the other toward perfection; and it is that which conſtitutes its preſent ſtate, which, however, is at all times liable to change.

"We ſuppoſe, moreover, that all the ſtars and all the planets are inhabited, but that nothing which is contained in one is to be found in another. This boundleſs magnificence, this infinite aſſemblage of various worlds, this glorious circle of exiſtence, ſeems neceſſary in the vaſt plan of creation. Theſe ſuns, then, theſe worlds ſo fair, ſo grand, ſo diverſified, appear to us habitations all prepared for man; they circulate, they correſpond, and are ſubordinate to each other. The human ſoul aſcends to all theſe worlds, as by a gradual and brilliant ladder, that leads, at every ſtep, to the higheſt degree of perfection. In this journey it forgets nothing it has ſeen,

or

or has learnt; it preſerves the magazine of its ideas, which are its moſt valuable treaſure, and by which it is conſtantly attended. When it launches forth to ſome ſublime diſcovery, it ſoars above the peopled worlds already explored, and mounts in proportion to the knowledge and virtue it has acquired. The ſoul of Newton has flown, by its native vigour, over all the worlds that it once weighed. It would be unjuſt to ſuppoſe that death had power to extinguiſh that mighty genius. Such a deſtruction would be more afflicting, more inconceivable, than that of the whole material univerſe. It would be equally abſurd to ſuppoſe, that his ſoul ſhould be placed on a level with that of an ignorant or ſtupid being. In fact, it were to no purpoſe for a man to improve his mind, if it were not capable of elevation, either by contemplation, or by the exerciſe of virtue: but an internal ſenſe, more powerful than all objections, ſays to him, *Exert all thy powers, and deſpiſe death; it depends on thyſelf to conquer, and to augment thy life, which is thought.*

"For thoſe groveling ſouls that are plunged in the filth of vice, or of ſloth, they will return to the point from whence they parted, or be yet more degraded; they have been for a long time attached to the rueful borders of inanity, have inclined toward ſenſeleſs matter, and have formed a vile and brutal race; while the generous ſouls have ſoared toward the divine and eternal light, they have plunged into that darkneſs, where ſcarce is ſeen one pale ray of exiſtence. A monarch, at his deceaſe, becomes a mole;

mole; a miniſter, a venomous ſerpent, inhabiting ſome filthy marſh; while the writer he diſdained, or rather could not comprehend, hath obtained a glorious rank among intelligent beings, the friends of humanity.

"Pythagoras diſcovered this equality of ſouls; he diſcerned the tranſmigration from one body to another; but it was in the ſame circle, and never extended beyond this globe. Our metempſychoſis is more rational, and ſuperior to the ancient. To thoſe noble and generous ſouls, who have made the happineſs of their brethren the rule of their conduct, death opens a glorious and brilliant career. What think you of our ſyſtem?"—I am charmed with it; it is in no wiſe inconſiſtent either with the power or goodneſs of God. This progreſſive march, this aſcent to different worlds, to the various revolving ſpheres, all the work of his hands, ſeems to me perfectly agreeable to the dignity of that Sovereign, who lays open all his dominions to the eye formed to ſurvey them. —"Yes, my brother," he replied, with rapture; "what proſpect ſo intereſting as the ſight of all thoſe worlds, that will enrich our ſouls with millions of novelties, by which they will inceſſantly advance toward perfection, and become more ſublime, in proportion as they approach the Supreme Being; will know him more perfectly, will love him with more enlightened ardour, and at laſt plunge into the ocean of his immenſity. O my ſoul, rejoice! thou canſt not paſs but from wonder to wonder; a proſpect perpetually new, perpetually miraculous, at-

tends thee. How great are thy hopes? Thou ſhalt run through the immenſe ſcene of nature, till thou art loſt in God, from whom thou deriveſt thy lofty origin."—But the wicked, I ſaid, they who have ſinned againſt the laws of nature, have ſhut their hearts againſt the cry of pity, that have murdered the innocent, and reigned for themſelves alone, what will become of them? Though I love not vengeance, yet I could with my own hands erect a hell for the puniſhment of certain inexorable ſouls, who, by pouring down tortures on the weak and the innocent, have made my blood boil with indignation.—"It is not for our weakneſs, conſtantly ſubordinate to ſo many paſſions, to ſay in what manner God will puniſh them. This, however, is certain; the wicked muſt feel the weight of juſtice; baniſhed far from his ſight will be every perfidious and cruel being, and all thoſe that are indifferent to the misfortunes of others. Never ſhall the ſoul of Socrates, or Marcus Aurelius rencounter that of Nero. This we may venture to affirm; but it is not for us to fix the weights that ſhall enter the eternal balance. We believe, however, that thoſe crimes which have not entirely obliterated the ſentiments of humanity, that the heart which is not become totally inſenſible, that even kings, who have not thought themſelves Gods, may become purified, by improving their natures during a long courſe of years; they will deſcend into thoſe globes where phyſical evils predominating will be the uſeful ſcourge to make them ſenſible of their dependence, and of the need they have of clemency, and may ſerve to obliterate the preſtiges

of their former pride. If they humble themſelves under the hand that corrects them, if they follow the lights of reaſon, if they become ſenſible how far diſtant they are from the ſtate they might enjoy, if they make ſome efforts to obtain it, then their pilgrimage will be greatly abridged; they will die in the prime of life, and will be lamented; while, ſmiling with great complacency on their rueful habitation, they will lament the lot of thoſe who are compelled to remain after them upon an unhappy planet, from whence they are delivered. Thus it is, that they who fear death know not what they fear; their terrors are the offſpring of their ignorance; and that ignorance is the firſt puniſhment of their crimes.

"Perhaps too, the moſt criminal will be deprived of the precious ſenſation of liberty: they will not be annihilated; for the idea of annihilation is repugnant to the nature of the human ſoul: there can be no annihilation under a creating, preſerving, and reſtoring God. Let not the wicked man flatter himſelf with that reſource, he will be for ever expoſed to the all-piercing eye; perſecutors of every kind will yet wretchedly ſubſiſt, but in the loweſt claſs of exiſtence; they will be inceſſantly ſubject to freſh tortures, that will renew their ſlavery and their miſery; but the duration of their puniſhment God alone can determine."

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

THE PRELATE.

"THERE goes a living ſaint. That man you ſee in a plain purple robe, who ſupports himſelf by a ſtick, and whoſe gait and aſpect diſcover neither oſtentation nor affected modeſty, is our prelate."—How! your prelate on foot.—"Yes, in imitation of the firſt apoſtles. They have, however, lately given him a chair; but of that he makes no uſe, except from abſolute neceſſity. His revenue flows almoſt entirely into the boſom of the poor; and when he beſtows his donations, he does not firſt inquire if the man be of his particular opinion; it is ſufficient for him that they are men, and that they are miſerable; he is not opinionated, fanatic, inflexible, or perſecutive; he does not abuſe his ſacred authority to place himſelf on a level with the throne; his aſpect is conſtantly ſerene, the image of a gentle, uniform, and peaceful mind, that never knows warmth or ſolicitude, but in doing good. He frequently ſays to thoſe he meets, 'My friends, charity, as St. Paul ſays, 'goes before faith; be beneficent, and you have ac-'compliſhed the law. Reprove your neighbour, if 'he err; but without pride, without bitterneſs. Per-'ſecute no man on account of belief; and take heed 'how you preſer yourſelf, in the bottom of your 'heart, to him that you have ſeen commit a fault; for 'to-morrow you will, perhaps be even more criminal.

'Preach by example only. Reckon not among the 'number of your enemies the man who diſpoſeth 'abſolutely of his thoughts. Fanaticiſm, in its cruel 'perſeverance, hath already cauſed too much evil, 'not to be dreaded, and prevented, even in its leaſt 'appearances. That monſter ſeems at firſt to flatter 'human pride, and to aggrandiſe the ſoul to which 'it hath acceſs; but it ſoon hath recourſe to fraud, 'to perfidy, and to cruelty; it tramples under foot 'every virtue, and becomes the moſt terrible ſcourge 'to humanity.'

But who, I ſaid, is that magiſtrate, with a venerable port, that ſtops him, and with whom he converſes with ſo much friendſhip?—"That is one of the fathers of his country; he is the head of the ſenate, who takes our prelate to dine with him. During their temperate and ſhort repaſt, frequent mention will be made of the poor, the widow, and the orphan, and of the means of relieving their misfortunes. Such is the intereſt that unites them, and which they treat with the moſt lively zeal; they never enter into vain diſcuſſions of thoſe antique and ludicrous prerogatives, which exerciſed, in ſo puerile a manner, the grave heads of your times."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

THE COMMUNION OF THE TWO INFINITES.

BUT who is that young man that I ſee ſurrounded by a buſy crowd? What joy is expreſſed in all his motions! How his viſage glows? What happineſs has befel him? From whence comes he?—"He comes from being initiated," my guide gravely replied; "though we have but few ceremonies, yet we have one that anſwers to what in your time, they called the *firſt communion*. We obſerve with a watchful eye, the genius, the character, and moſt ſecret actions of a young man. When we perceive that he ſearches out ſolitary places for reflection; when we ſurpriſe him with a melting eye; gazing earneſtly on the vaulted roof of heaven, contemplating, in a ſweet ecſtaſy, the azure curtain that ſeems ready to be drawn from before him, then there is no time to loſe; then reaſon appears to have attained its full maturity, and he is become capable of receiving to advantage a diſplay of the wonders of creation.

We make choice of a ſerene night, when the ſtarry hoſt ſhine forth in their fulleſt luſtre. Accompanied by his friends and relations, the young man is conducted to our obſervatory; his eye is inſtantly applied to a teleſcope*; we cauſe Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, all

* The teleſcope is the moral cannon that has laid in ruins all thoſe ſuperſtitions and phantoms that tormented the hu-

all the mighty bodies that float in order amidſt the ethereal ſpace, to paſs before him; we open to him, ſo to ſay, the infinite abyſs; all thoſe radiant globes preſs in crowds upon his aſtoniſhed ſight; then a venerable paſtor ſays to him, with an awful, majeſtic voice, 'Young man, behold the God of the univerſe, 'who reveals himſelf to thee in the midſt of his works; 'adore the God of theſe worlds, whoſe extenſive 'power exceeds not only the ſight of man, but even 'his imagination; adore that Creator, whoſe reſplen-'dent majeſty is impreſſed on the front of theſe ſtars 'that obey his laws. When thou beholdeſt theſe 'prodigies, the works of his hand, think with what 'bounty* he is able to reward the heart that is de-'voted to him. Remember, that among his ſtu-

'pendous

man race. It ſeems as if our reaſon has been enlarged in proportion to the immeaſurable ſpace that has been diſcovered and traverſed by the ſight.

* Monteſquieu ſomewhere ſays, that the pictures we draw of hell are finiſhed; but that when we would ſpeak of eternal happineſs, we know not what to promiſe the good folks. This thought is an abuſe of that lively wit he ſometimes applies improperly. Let any ſenſible man reflect but a moment on the number of keen and delicate pleaſures that proceed from the mind. How far do they ſurpaſs thoſe of the ſenſes! and what is the body without the mind? What are our ſenſations when we chance to fall into a profound and delicious reverie, where the imagination roves without reſtraint, and creates to itſelf exquiſite and variegated delights that have no reſemblance to any material pleaſures? Why cannot the power of the Creator increaſe and

prolong

'pendous works, man, endowed with the faculty of 'perceiving and diſcerning them, holds the firſt 'rank; and that, as the child of God, he ought to 'venerate that reſpectable title.'

The ſcene is then changed; a microſcope is brought, and a new univerſe, more aſtoniſhing, more wonderful than the former, is diſplayed before him. Thoſe animated points that his eye for the firſt time beholds, that move in their inconceivable exility, and are endowed with the ſame organs as the giants of the earth, preſent to him a new attribute of the intelligence of the Creator.

The paſtor then proceeds in the ſame tone: 'Feeble 'beings as we are, placed between two infinities, 'oppreſſed on every ſide by the force of the divine 'greatneſs, let us adore in ſilence the ſame hand that 'has illumined ſo many ſuns, and impreſſed with life 'theſe imperceptible atoms. That ſight, doubtleſs, 'which has compoſed the delicate ſtructure of the 'heart, the nerves, the minuteſt fibres of an emmet, 'can eaſily penetrate the inmoſt receſſes of our hearts. 'What thought ſo hidden as to be concealed from 'that almighty eye, to which the lacteal way appears 'no more than the horn of a mite? Let us render 'our thoughts all worthy to be known by God, to 'whom

prolong that happy ſtate? Is not that ecſtaſy which fills the ſoul of the juſt man, when meditating on his future ſtate, a type of his future pleaſure, when the veil ſhall be taken away, and he ſhall range over the vaſt plan of the univerſe.

'whom they are ever expoſed. How oft in the 'courſe of the day, may the ſoul mount towards the 'Supreme, and be ſtrengthened by his preſence! 'Alas! the whole courſe of our lives cannot be bet-'ter employed than in forming, at the bottom of 'our hearts, an eternal hymn of praiſe, and acts of 'thankſgiving.'

"The young man remains agitated and aſtoniſhed by the double impreſſion that he receives almoſt at the ſame inſtant; he weeps with joy; he cannot ſatisfy his ardent curioſity; he is tranſported at every advance he makes in theſe two worlds; his words are nothing but a long hymn of admiration; his heart pants with ſurpriſe and awe. At theſe moments, with what energy, with what ſincerity does he adore the Being of beings! How is he filled with the divine preſence! How does the teleſcope extend, ennoble his ideas, and render him worthy to be an inhabitant of this wonderful univerſe? He is cured of his terreſtrial ambition, and of the little hatreds that it engenders; he reſpects all men as animated with the ſame breath of life; he is the brother of all that the Creator has formed *.

"His glory, from that hour, is to reap in the heaven ſtore of wonders; he appears to himſelf of more conſequence, ſince he has been endowed with the capacity

* They endeavoured to ridicule a ſaint, who ſaid, "Feed on, thou ewe, my ſiſter; leap for joy, ye fiſh that are my brethren." This ſaint was much more eſtimable than his fellows; he was, indeed, a philoſopher.

pacity of underſtanding theſe great truths; he ſays to himſelf, God is manifeſt to me; my eye has viſited Saturn, the ſtar Sirius, and thoſe ſuns that crowd the milky way; I find that my being is more noble than I imagined, ſince the Supreme has vouchſafed to eſtabliſh a relation between my nihility and his greatneſs. O! how happy am I to have received life and intelligence! I begin to ſee what will be the lot of the virtuous man. O moſt bountiful God! grant that I may eternally love and adore thee!

"He returns many times to feaſt on theſe ſublime objects. From that day he is initiated to the rank of thinking beings; but he religiouſly keeps the ſecret, that others, who have not yet attained the age to enjoy ſuch prodigies, may feel the ſame degree of pleaſure and ſurpriſe. On the day conſecrated to the praiſe of the Creator, it is an affecting ſight to ſee on our obſervatory the numerous adorers of God falling on their knees, the eye applied to the teleſcope, and the ſpirit in prayer, ſending forth their ſouls with their ſight, towards the Fabricator of theſe ſtupendous miracles*. We then ſing certain hymns, compoſed in the vulgar tongue, by the firſt writers of

* If to-morrow the finger of the Almighty ſhould write theſe words upon the clouds, in letters of fire, *Mortals, adore a God!* doubtleſs, every one would fall on his knees in adoration. Alas! thoughtleſs, ſtupid mortals! Is it neceſſary that God ſpeak to thee in French, Chineſe, or Arabic? What are the innumerable ſtars, rolling in vacuity, but ſacred characters intelligible to every eye, and that manifeſtly declare a God, who reveals himſelf to us?

of our nation; they are in every mouth, and describe the wisdom and munificence of the Divinity. We cannot conceive how a whole people could formerly invoke God in a language they did not understand: that people must either have been very absurd, or have burned with a most devouring zeal.

"Frequently, among us, a young man, giving way to his transports, expresses to all the assembly the sentiments with which his heart is filled*; he communicates his enthusiasm to the most frigid tempers; divine love inflames and invigorates his expressions. The Eternal then seems to descend in the midst of us, to listen to his children, who entertain each other with his sacred cares and his paternal goodness. Our philosophers and astronomers are eager, on those days of festivity to reveal their choicest discoveries; as heralds of the Divinity, they make us sensible of his presence, even in those objects that appear to us the most inanimate. All things are filled with God they say, and all things reveal him†. We there-

* When a young man is seized with the enthusiasm of virtue, even though it should be false or dangerous, we should be cautious how we undeceive him. Leave him to himself; he will discover his error. Should you endeavour to correct him, you may, by one word, chance to destroy his soul's health.

† The exterior worship of the ancients consisted of feasts, of hymns, and dances, together with a very few dogmas. The Divinity was not regarded by them as a solitary being, armed with thunder-bolts; he vouchsafed to communicate him-

therefore doubt, whether, in all the extent of the kingdom, it is possible to find one atheist*. It is not fear that keeps him silent; we should think him too much worthy of pity to inflict any other punishment on him than shame; we should only banish him from amongst us, if he became an enemy to the public good, and obstinately determined to oppose a palpable, comfortable, and salutary truth†; but first we should enjoin him to go through an assiduous course of experimental physics. It would not be possible for him to oppose the evidence of that demonstrative science; it has discovered relations so surprising, so remote, and, at the same time, so simple, when once they are known; there are so many accumulated wonders that lay hid in its bosom, and which are now exposed to open day; in a word, nature is now so elucidated, even in its minutest parts, that he who should

himself, and to render his presence visible. They thought they did him more honour by feasts than by tears and lamentation. The legislature that is best acquainted with the human heart will always lead it to virtue by the road of pleasure.

* It is for the atheist to prove that the notion of a God is contradictory, and that it is impossible there should be such a being; it is the duty of him that denies to produce his reasons.

† When they tell me of the atheistic mandarins of China, who preach the most admirable morality, and devote themselves entirely to the public good, I will not give the lie to the history, but I will say, that of all things in the world, it appears to me the most incredible.

ſhould deny an intelligent Creator would not only be regarded as a ſtupid wretch, but as a being totally perverſe; and to find ſuch a one among us would be a cauſe of mourning to the whole nation *.

"But, thank heaven! as no one in our city has the miſerable folly to deſire to diſtinguiſh himſelf by notions that are extravagant, and diametrically oppoſite to the univerſal judgment of mankind, we are all of one opinion on that important point; and that being ſettled, you will readily believe, that principles of the pureſt morality are eaſily deduced, ſupported, as they are on that unſhaken baſis †.

"They thought, in your age, that it was impoſſible to poſſeſs the people with a religion purely ſpiritual; that was a grievous error; many of your philoſophers reviled human nature on that falſe ſuppoſition. The idea of a God devoid of every imperfection was not, however, ſo difficult to conceive. It is proper to repeat here once more, 'That it is the ſoul that perceives God.' Why ſhould falſehood be more natural to man than truth? It would have been ſufficient for your age to have baniſhed thoſe impoſtors that trafficked in ſacred things, who pretended to be mediators

* The omnipreſence of a great and bountiful God ennobles the frame of nature, and ſpreads every where a certain vivifying and animated air, which a ſceptic and deſponding doctrine can never give.

† "I fear God," ſaid a certain perſon; "and after God, I fear none but the man who does not fear him."

mediators between God and man, and who diffused prejudices even more vile than the gold by which they were rewarded. In a word, idolatry, that ancient monster, whom the painters, the statuaries, and poets, have, to the misfortune and blinding of mankind, rivalled each other with deifying, has been overthrown by our triumphant hands.

"That there is but one God, an uncreated spiritual Being, is the basis of our religion. There need but one sun to enlighten the universe; there needs but one luminous idea to enlighten human reason; all those foreign and factitious aids, with which they would assist the mind, serve only to confound it: they sometimes give it, we confess, an energy that the simple truth does not always show; but that is a state of intoxication which becomes dangerous. A religious spirit has produced superstition; particular forms of adoration have been prescribed; and the liberty of mankind, being attacked in its most valuable privilege, has justly revolted. We abhor that sort of tyranny; we ask nothing of the heart that it does acknowledge; but is it possible for any one to oppose those luminous and affecting impressions that are offered him merely for his own happiness?

"It is to offend against the infinitely perfect Being, to calumniate human reason, or to represent it as an uncertain and false guide. That divine law, which speaks from one end of the world to the other, is far preferable to all factitious religions invented by priests, whose fatal effects prove them to be false; they form a tottering edifice that is in perpetual need

of fresh props. The natural law is an unshaken tower, from whence issue, not discord, but peace, and unanimity*. Those impostors, who have made God speak according to the particular passions, have caused the most horrid actions to pass for virtues; and by proclaiming a barbarous God, those wretches have driven many men of tender feelings into atheism, who naturally became more desirous of destroying the idea of a vindictive being, than of displaying it to mankind†.

We

* The natural law, so simple and so pure, speaks an uniform language to all nations; it is intelligible to every sensible being; it is not surrounded by shadows and mysteries; it is animated; it is graved on every heart in indelible characters; its decrees are secure from the revolutions of the earth, from the injuries of time, and from the caprice of custom; every virtuous man is one of its priests; errors and vices are its victims; the universe is its temple; and God is the only Divinity it adores. These things have been said a thousand times; but it is good still to repeat them. Yes, morality is the only religion necessary to man; when he is rational, then he is religious; when he is useful, then he is virtuous. Every man perceives, when he seriously examines his own heart, when he considers his own situation, what he owes to himself and to others.

† It is by crushing men by the weight of terrors, it is by confounding their understanding, that most legislators have made slaves, and have flattered themselves with keeping them eternally under their yoke. The hell that some Christians have imagined, is, without doubt, the most injurious blasphemy that ever was offered to the divine justice and mercy. Evil ever makes a stronger impression on men than good;

"We, on the contrary, it is on the goodneſs of the Creator, ſo manifeſtly expreſſed, that we elevate our hearts towards him. The ſhadows of this low world, the tranſient evils that afflict us, even death itſelf, cannot terrify us. All theſe are doubtleſs uſeful, neceſſary, and even tend to produce our greater felicity. Our knowledge is bounded, and therefore cannot comprehend the deſigns of the Omniſcient. If the whole univerſe were to paſs away, what ſhould we fear, ſeeing, whatever happens, we muſt neceſſarily fall under the protection of God."

CHAP.

good; therefore, a malevolent divinity ſtrikes the imagination more ſtrongly than one that is beneficent. For this reaſon it is that a gloomy, mournful aſpect prevails in all the religions of the world; they diſpoſe mankind to melancholy; the name of God perpetually renews in them a ſenſe of terror. A filial confidence, a reſpectful hope, would do far more honour to the Author of every good; and with this genuine Chriſtianity perfectly accords; it conveys no idea of puniſhment for wickedneſs but that of parental chaſtiſement, the object of which is to reform and fit the ſufferer for felicity.

CHAP. XXII.

A REMARKABLE MONUMENT.

AS I came out of the temple, they conducted me to a place not far distant, to see a monument lately erected. It was of marble; it excited my curiosity, and inspired me with a desire to see through that veil of emblems with which it was surrounded. They would not explain it; but left me the pleasure and reputation of the discovery.

A commanding figure attracted my regard; by the sweet majesty of its countenance, by the dignity of its stature, and by the attributes of peace and concord, I saw that it was sacred Humanity. It was surrounded by other kneeling statues, representing women in the attitude of grief and remorse. Alas! this emblem was not difficult to explain; they represented the nations demanding pardon of Humanity for the cruel wounds they had given her during the last twenty centuries. France, on her knees, implored pardon for the horrible night of St. Bartholomew, for the cruel revocation of the edict of Nantes, and for the persecution of those sages that sprung upon her bosom. How, with her gentle aspect, could she ever commit such foul crimes! England abjured her fanaticism, her two roses, and stretched out her hand to philosophy; she promised to shed no blood but that of tyrants*. Holland detested the parties

* She has kept her word.

parties of Gomar and Arminius, and the punishment of the virtuous Barnevelt. Germany concealed her haughty front, and saw with horror the history of her intestine divisions, and of her frantic theologic rage, that was so remarkably contrasted by the natural coldness of her constitution. Poland beheld, with indignation those despicable confederates, who, in my days, tore her entrails, and renewed the atrocities of the croisades. Spain, still more criminal than her sisters, groaned at the thought of having covered the new continent* with thirty-five millions of carcases, with having pursued the deplorable remains of a thousand nations into the depths of forests, and into the caverns of rocks, and having taught animals, less ferocious than themselves, to drink human blood. Spain may sigh and supplicate her sill, but never ought to hope for pardon; the punishment of so many wretches condemned to the mines ought for ever to be urged against her†. The statuary had represented

* The Europeans in the new world: what a book yet unwrote!

† When I think on those wretched beings who enjoy nought of human nature but grief, buried alive in the entrails of the earth, sighing after that sun which they have had the misfortune once to see, but shall never more behold, who groan in their horrid dungeons each time they breathe, and who know that they shall never escape from that frightful night, but to enter into the eternal darkness of the grave; then a shivering runs through all my frame, I seem to descend into their infernal regions, I breathe with

repreſented ſeveral mutilated ſlaves, who, looking up to heaven, cried for vengeance. We retired with terror; we ſeemed to hear their cries. The figure of Spain was compoſed of a marble veined with blood; and thoſe frightful ſtreaks are as indelible as the the memory of her crimes*.

At a diſtance, was ſeen the figure of Italy, the original cauſe of ſo many evils, the firſt ſource of thoſe furies that have covered the two worlds. She was proſtrate, her face againſt the earth; ſhe ſtifled with her feet the flaming torch of excommunication; ſhe ſeemed fearful to ſolicit her pardon. I would have examined her aſpect more cloſely; but, on a near approach, I found a thunder-bolt that lately fell had blackened her viſage and deſtroyed all her features.

Radiant Humanity raiſed her pathetic front amidſt all theſe humble and humiliated figures. I remarked that the ſtatuary had given her the features of that free and courageous nation, who broke the chains of tyrants;

them the ſtench of the torches that illumine their hideous dwellings; I ſee that gold, the idol of mankind, in its true aſpect; and ſomething tells me, that Providence ought to attach to that metal, the ſource of ſo many barbarities, the chaſtiſement of thoſe innumerable evils that it cauſes, even before it ſees the day.

* Twenty millions of men have fallen by the ſword of Spaniards, and the kingdom of Spain contains ſcarce ſeven millions.

tyrants; the hat of the great Tell* adorned her head, and formed the moſt reſpectable diadem that ever bound the brows of a monarch†. She ſmiled upon auguſt Philoſophy, her ſiſter, whoſe pure hands were ſpread towards heaven, by whom ſhe was regarded with the higheſt complacency.

In going from this place, I obſerved toward the right, on a magnificent pedeſtal, the figure of a negroe; his head was bare, his arm extended, his eye fierce, his attitude noble and commanding; round him were ſpread the broken relics of twenty ſcepters; and at his feet I read theſe words: *To the Avenger of the New World.*

I cried out with ſurpriſe and joy.—"Yes," they ſaid, with equal rapture; "nature has at laſt produced

* William Tell, the famous Swiſs, who was commanded by Griſler, governor of Switzerland for the emperor Albertus, to ſhoot an apple off his ſon's head, ſtanding at a conſiderable diſtance, which he did without hurting the child. He was one of the principal perſons concerned in the revolution which happened in that country, in the year 1307.

† If Plato was to reviſit the earth, he would certainly regard with admiration the Helvetic republics. The Swiſs have excelled in that which conſtitutes the eſſence of a republic, which is, to preſerve its own liberties without attempting any thing againſt that of others. Good faith, candour, a love of labour, an alliance with all nations, unknown in hiſtory, ſtrength and courage ſupported in the midſt of a profound peace, notwithſtanding the difference of religions, are what may ſerve as a model to all nations, and make them bluſh at their follies.

duced this wonderful man, this immortal man, who was to deliver a world from the moſt outrageous, the moſt inveterate and atrocious tyranny. His ſagacity, his valour, his patience, his fortitude, and virtuous vengeance, have been rewarded; he has broke aſunder the chains of all his countrymen. So vaſt a number of ſlaves, oppreſſed by the moſt odious ſervitude, ſeemed but to wait his ſignal to become ſo many heroes. Not the torrent that breaks the dykes, nor the burſting thunder, have a more ſudden, or more violent effect. At the ſame inſtant, they poured forth the blood of all their tyrants; French, Spaniſh, Engliſh, Dutch, and Portugueſe, all became a prey to the ſword, to fire, and poiſon. The ſoil of America drank with avidity that blood for which it had ſo long thirſted; and the bones of their anceſtors, cowardly butchered, ſeem to riſe up and leap for joy.

"The natives have reaſſumed their unalienable rights, as they were thoſe of nature. This heroic avenger has given liberty to a world, of which he is the titular deity; and the other world has decreed him crowns and homages. He came like the ſtorm which extends itſelf over ſome criminal city that the thunder is ready to deſtroy; he was the exterminating angel, to whom God reſigned his ſword of juſtice; he has ſhown by this example, that ſooner or later, cruelty will be puniſhed; and that Providence keeps in reſerve ſuch mighty ſouls, to ſend them upon the earth, that they might reſtore that equilibrium which the iniquity of ferocious ambition had deſtroyed*.

* This hero doubtleſs, would have ſpared thoſe generous quakers, who have lately given their ſlaves their liberty; a me-

CHAP. XXIII.

THE BREAD, THE WINE, &c.

I WAS ſo pleaſed with my conductor, that I was fearful every inſtant leſt he ſhould quit me. The hour for dinner had been rung; as I was far diſtant from my lodging, and as all my acquaintance were dead, I was looking out for ſome tavern, where I might civily invite him to dine, and acknowledge his complaiſance at leaſt; but was continually at a loſs, for we paſſed through ſeveral ſtreets without ſeeing one place of entertainment.

What is become, I ſaid, of all thoſe taverns, all thoſe eating-houſes, that, united and divided in the ſame employ, were continually at variance with each other*, that ſwarmed at every corner, and formerly peopled

a memorable and affecting epoch, at which I ſhed tears of joy, and that makes me deteſt thoſe Chriſtians who do not imitate them.

* He that turns the ſpit muſt not lay the cloth, and he that lays the cloth muſt not turn the ſpit. It would be curious to examine the bye-laws of the ſeveral communities of the good city of Paris. The parliament ſat gravely for ſeveral days, in order to fix the invariable rights of a roaſting cook. A remarkable cauſe of this kind has lately occured. The company of bookſellers of Paris pretend, that the genius of a Monteſquieu, a Corneille, &c. belongs of right

peopled the city?—"That was one of the abuſes your age ſuffered to ſubſiſt; they tolerated a mortal ſophiſtication that killed the citizens when in perfect health. The poor, that is to ſay, three parts of the town, not being able to procure the natural wines, compelled by thirſt, and by the neceſſity of repairing their exhauſted ſtrength after labour, drank a ſlow poiſon in that deteſtable liquor, whoſe daily uſe concealed the perfidy; their nerves were weakened, their entrails dried up. "What could you expect? The duty was become ſo exceſſive, that it greatly ſurpaſſed the price of the commodity. One would have imagined that wine was forbid by the law, or that the ſoil of France was become that of England. Of but little conſequence was it that a whole city was poiſoned, provided the farmers of the taxes were able to advance in their contracts every year*. The taxes muſt

right to them; that whatever proceeds from the brain of a philoſopher forms a part of their patrimony; that all human learning, when once ſtamped upon paper, becomes a commodity in which no man has a right to deal but themſelves; and that the author of the work can reap no ſort of advantage from it, but what they pleaſe to grant him. Theſe extraordinary pretenſions have been publicly expoſed in a printed memoir. M. Linguet, a man of letters, of eloquence, and of a fruitful genius, has poured down ridicule in great plenty on thoſe ludicrous venders of books; but, alas, the force of the ridicule falls on the wretched legiſlation of the commerce of France.

* A peaſant had an aſs that carried panniers, which his maſter filled with apples to the brim. The poor animal, though

muſt be raiſed, the price of wine muſt be enormouſly enhanced, to ſatisfy the horrible avarice of the farmer-general; and as the great people were not affected by this ſecret poiſon, it was very indifferent to them how faſt the ſcum of the earth diſappeared, for ſo they called the labouring part of the nation. "How was it poſſible that they could willingly turn their eyes from a murderous abuſe, and one that was ſo fatal to ſociety? What! could they publicly ſell poiſon in your city, and the magiſtrate give himſelf no concern about it? O barbarous people! Among us, the crime of the cheating adulterator is capital; the poiſoner would be put to death; but we have ſwept away thoſe vile tax gatherers, who corrupted every commodity they touched. Our wines arrive in the public market as nature has formed them, and the citizen of Paris, rich or poor, drinks in a ſalutary liquor,

though heavily loaden, trod on with obedient and patient ſteps. At a ſmall diſtance from his village, the clown ſaw ſome ripe apples that hung over the path. "O, ſays he, you can carry theſe, as you carry the others ſo well." The aſs, as patient as his maſter was rapacious, redoubled his efforts, but his ſtrength was unequal to his obedience. They had not gone far before the clown ſaw an apple lie upon the ground. "O, for this one, he ſaid, one can never make any difference." The poor beaſt was unable to reply; but his ſtrength was exhauſted, he ſunk, and died under his burden.

Now, the moral is this. The peaſant is the prince, and the aſs is the people: but they muſt be a very pacific, aſs-like people indeed, who will ſuffer themſelves to be crushed to death: if they have any ſpirit, they will die firſt.

quor, a health to his king, to the king that he loves, and by whom he is both beloved and eſteemed."—And the bread, is that dear?—"It is conſtantly at the ſame price*; for we have wiſely eſtabliſhed public granaries, always full of corn, in caſe of neceſſity; and which we do not imprudently ſell to ſtrangers, to buy it again twice as dear three months after. They have balanced the intereſt of the grower and the conſumer, and both have therein found their account. Exportation is not forbid, as it is highly uſeful; but it is confined to judicious bounds. A man of ability and integrity watches over this equilibrium, and ſhuts the ports, when it inclines too much to one ſide*. Beſides, canals are now cut through the

* The beſt method to diminiſh the vices of a people is to render them eaſy and content. Neceſſity begets three-fourths of their crimes. The people, among whom reigns plenty, are not peſtered with thieves or murderers. The firſt maxim that a king ſhould learn is, that the good manners of a people depend upon a competency of proviſions.

† We make the fineſt ſpeculations in the world; We calculate, we write, we are immerſed in political ideas, and never were errors ſo multiplied. Common ſenſe would certainly ſet theſe matters in a much clearer light. We are become barbarians and ſceptics, with the pretended balance of reaſon in our hands. Let us again become men. It is the heart, and not the head, that forms great and generous actions. Henry IV. was the beſt of kings, not becauſe he had more extenſive views than others, but becauſe being ſincerely the friend of man, his heart dictated thoſe meaſures that ſecured their happineſs. What an unhappy age is that, when they only reaſon about it.

the kingdom; we have joined the Saon to the Moſelle and the Loire, and have thus formed a new junction between the two ſeas infinitely more uſeful than the ancient. Commerce ſpreads its treaſures from Amſterdam to Nantes, and from Rouen to Marſeilles; we have formed a canal in Provence, which was wanted by that fine country, favoured by the moſt benign regards of the ſun. In vain, did a zealous citizen offer you his diſcoveries and his labour; while you maintained a number of triffling workmen at a great expence, you ſuffered that great man to attend for twenty years in a forced inactivity. In a word, our lands are ſo well cultivated, the rank of a huſbandman is become ſo reputable, and ſuch order and liberty reign throughout the country, that if any man in power ſhould abuſe it, by committing a monopoly, juſtice, who lifts her balance over the palace of the king, would immediately bridle his temerity. Juſtice is no longer an empty name, as it was in your age; her ſword deſcends on every guilty head; and examples of this ſort ſhould be calculated more to intimidate the great than the common people, as they are a hundred times more diſpoſed to fraud, to rapine, and oppreſſion of every kind."—Inform me more particularly, I entreat you, of this important matter. It ſeems you have adopted the prudent method of magazining your corn; that is wiſely done; you are thereby ſure to prevent a public calamity. My age committed grievous errors in this matter; they were ſkillful in calculations; but they never made allowance for the horrid quantity of abuſes. Writers, who had good deſigns, ſuppoſed a juſt re-

gulation, because with that all things run on perfectly easy. O, how they argued about the famous law of exportation*! and while they were busied in their fine disputations, how the people suffered by famine

* This famous law, which was to have been the signal of public felicity, has been the signal of famine. It has destroyed the good effects of the most fruitful harvests; it has devoured the poor at the door of the granaries that cracked with the weight of corn. A mortal scourge, unknown to the nation, has rendered its own soil a stranger, and has displayed the most horrid depravation of humanity; man has shown himself the most cruel enemy to man. Terrible example, and as dangerous as the scourge itself! In a word, the law has consecrated private inhumanity. I am very ready to suppose great benevolence in those writers, who have been the supporters of this law; perhaps it may one day do good; but it must be eternally reproached with having caused, though undesignedly, the death of thousands of men, and the miseries of those that death has spared. They were too precipitate; they foresaw all, except the avarice of man, so strongly excited by that dangerous allurement. It is a syphon (as M. Linguet has emphatically expressed it), that has been put into the hands of commerce, and by which it has sucked out the substance of the people. The public clamour should take place of the public gazettes. We have heard the cries of grief; therefore the institution is bad. That the evil proceeds from a local cause is no argument; it should be foreseen and prevented; it should be remembered, that an article of the utmost necessity ought not to be abandoned to fortuitous events; that so great a novelty, in a vast kingdom, would give it a shock that would certainly oppress the weakest part. The oeconomists, however, promised themselves the contrary. They must avow, that they have been misled, even by a desire to serve

famine! "Thank Providence who has watched over this kingdom, or you would have fed on the grafs of the field; but it had pity on you, and pardoned you, becaufe you knew not what you did. How prolific is error!

"There is one profeffion, which is common to almoft all the inhabitants, which is that of agriculture, taken

ferve the public; that they had not fufficiently matured their project; that they had confidered it feparately only, whereas in the political œconomy all things are connected. It is not fufficient to be calculators; they fhould be ftatefmen; they fhould conſider what will be deſtroyed or altered by the paffions, and what effect the weight of the rich will have on the poor. They have conſidered the object from three points of view only, and have omitted that which was of the utmoft importance, that which related to the labouring part of the people, and who compofe three fourths of the nation. The price of their daily labour is not increafed, and the avarice of the farmers-general holds them in a ſtill greater dependence; they are not able to appeafe the cries of their children by redoubling their labours. The dearneſs of bread has been the thermometer of other proviſions, and each private perſon has found himſelf leſs rich by one half. This law, therefore, has only ſerved as a ſcreen to increaſe legally the moſt horrid monopolies; it has been turned againſt the nation whom it was to have made flouriſh. Sigh, writers! and though you have followed the generous notions of a heart truly patriotic, learn how dangerous it is not to know your age and mankind, and to give them a wholeſome gift which they may turn into a poiſon. It remains for you now to comfort the ſick, to point out their remedy, and, if it be poſſible, to ſave them from deſtruction. *Hic labor, hoc opus.*

taken in its fullest extent. The women, as weak, are destined to cares purely domestic, never laboured the land; their hands prepared the wool, the flax, &c. Man would blush to load them with any laborious employ.

"Three things are held in peculiar honour among us; to be the father of a child, to cultivate a field, and to build a house. The culture of the land is also moderate; the husbandman does not toil from early dawn till after sun-set, bear all the heat of the day, and exhausted sink, imploring in vain a small portion of what springs from the labour of his hands. Can there be a destiny more distressful, more horrid, than that of the poor peasant, who finds his labours continually increasing, and fills with groans the short space of his days? What slavery is not preferable to the eternal struggle against those vile tyrants who continually pillage their huts, by imposing taxes on extreme indigence? The excess of contempt, with which they are treated, makes them insensible even to despair; and, in his deplorable condition, the oppressed, degraded villager, while he ploughs the heavy land, bows down his head, and finds no difference between himself and his ox.

"Our fertile plains resound with songs of joy; the father of each family sets the example: the task is easy; and when it is done, joy begins; the intervals of repose render their labour more vigorous; and it is constantly attended by sports or rural dances. Formerly, they went to the towns in search of pleasure;

fure; now they find it in the villages, where each one bears a ſmiling viſage. Labour has no longer an ugly and forbidding aſpect, as it no longer reſembles ſlavery; a gentle voice invites them to their duty, and all becomes eaſy, and even agreeable. In ſhort, as we have not that number of idle ſubjects, which, like ſtagnating humours, impedes the circulation of the body politic, each individual has time for pleaſing amuſement, and no one rank is cruſhed to ſupport another.

"You will eaſily conceive, therefore, that having no monks, nor prieſts, nor numerous domeſtics, nor uſeleſs valets, nor workmen employed in childiſh luxuries, a few hours of labour are ſufficient for the public wants. Our lands produce plenteous crops of every kind; what is ſuperfluous we ſend to foreigners, and receive in return other commodities.

"You will find our markets abundant in all things neceſſary to life; pulſe, fruits, fowls, fiſh, &c. The rich do not, by their extravagance, oppreſs the poor; far from us is the fear of not having a ſufficiency; we never practiſe the inſatiable avidity of procuring three times more than we can conſume; we regard diſſipation with horror.

"If nature, during one year, treats us with rigour, the ſcarcity does not coſt the lives of thouſands; the granaries are opened, and the wiſe precautions of man, ſoftens the inclemency of the air and the wrath of heaven. A food that is meagre, dry, badly pre-

pared, and of unwholesome juices, does not enter the stomach of the man accustomed to hard labour; the rich do not separate the finest flour, and leave to others the bran only; such an outrage would be regarded as a shameful crime; if we should know that a single man languished for want, we should all regard ourselves as culpable; every man would lament his crime with tears.

"The poorest subject, therefore, is free from all apprehensions of want; famine, like a threatning spectre, does not call the labourer from his straw, while he is drowning his griefs for a few minutes in sleep. He rises without sorrowfully regarding the dawning day. When he would appease the sensations of hunger, he is not fearful of conveying, with his food, poison into his veins.

"They who are in possession of riches employ them in making new and useful experiments; such as serve more clearly to investigate a science, or carry an art toward perfection; they erect majestic edifices; they are distinguished by honourable enterprizes; their fortune does not flow into the lap of a foul concubine, or upon an iniquitous table, where roll three dice; their wealth takes a form, a consistence that is respectable in the pleased eyes of the citizens. The darts of envy, therefore, never attack their possessions; we bless those generous hands, which, as depositaries of the gifts of Providence, have fulfilled its views, by erecting such useful monuments.

"But

"But when we consider the wealthy of your age, the scavengers' carts, I think, did not contain matter more vile than their souls; gold in their hands, baseness in their hearts, they formed a kind of conspiracy against the poor; they rioted in the labour, the care, and pains of a numerous, unfortunate people; they regarded with unconcern the sweat of their brows, and those terrors that made them see an old age abandoned to want; their violence became justice; the laws were only exerted to sanctify their robberies. As a fire destroys all that is near it, so they destroyed all that joined to their lands; and if they were robbed but of an apple, they raised incessant clamours, and death alone could expiate so enormous a crime." —What could I reply? I held down my head; and falling into a profound reverie, I walked concentered in my thoughts.—"You will have other subjects for reflection," said my guide; "remark (as your eyes are fixed on the ground) that the blood of animals does not flow in the streets and awake the idea of carnage; the air is freed from that cadaverous scent, which engendered so many diseases. A clean appearance is the most certain sign of public order and harmony; it reigns in every part. From a salutary, and I will venture to say, moral precaution, we have established slaughter-houses out of the town. If nature has condemned us to eat the flesh of animals, we should at least spare ourselves the sight of their death. The trade of a butcher is followed by foreigners driven from their country, they are protected by the law; but we do not rank them in the class of citizens; no one of us exercises that sanguinary and cruel

cruel art; we are fearful leſt it ſhould inſenſibly accuſtom our brethren to loſe the natural impreſſion of pity, which, you know, is the moſt amiable and moſt worthy preſent nature has given us*.

CHAP. XXIV.

THE PRINCE A PUBLICAN.

"YOU are deſirous to dine," ſaid my guide; "for the walk has procured you an appetite. Very well; let us enter this public houſe."—I ſtopped ſhort. You do not obſerve, I ſaid, this is ſome nobleman's gate; there are his arms; it is a prince that lives here.—"Aye, certainly, he is a prince; for he always keeps three open tables; one for himſelf and his family, another for ſtrangers, and a third for the neceſſitous."—Are there many ſuch tables kept in town.—"Yes, by all the princes."—You muſt then have a great number of idle paraſites."—"Not at all; for when any one makes a practice of it,

* The Banians eat nothing that has had life; they are even fearful of killing the leaſt inſect; they throw rice and beans into the river, and grain upon the earth for the nourifhment of the fiſh and birds. When they meet a hunter or fiſher, they pray him earneſtly to deſiſt from his enterprize; and if he be deaf to their prayers, they offer him money for his gun or nets; and if that will not do, they trouble the waters, and cry with all their ſtrength to drive away the birds. Hiſtory of Voyages.

it, and is not a ſtranger, he is marked; the cenſors of the city inquire into his abilities, and aſſign him an employment; or if he be found fit for nothing but to eat, he is baniſhed the city, as in the republic of bees, they drive all thoſe from the hive who are only able to conſume the common ſtock."—You have then cenſors?—"Yes; or they rather merit another name; they are monitors that bear about the torch of reaſon, and cure indocile or rebellious ſpirits, by employing ſometimes the eloquence of the heart, and ſometimes gentleneſs and addreſs.

"Theſe tables are intended for the aged, the ſick, teeming women, orphans, and ſtrangers. Every one ſits down without ſhame, and without heſitation; they there find a wholeſome, light, and plentiful repaſt. This prince, who reſpects humanity, does not diſplay a luxury as offenſive as it is faſtuous; he does not employ three hundred men in providing a dinner for twelve perſons; his table does not repreſent the decorations of an opera; he does not glory in what is a real diſgrace, in a ſenſeleſs, monſtrous profuſion*; when he dines, it is ſufficient that he has an appetite; he thinks, it would be to make a god of himſelf, to have a hundred diſhes ſerved up to him,

* When we ſee the print of Gargantua, that has a mouth as large as an oven, and ſwallows at one meal twelve hundred pounds of bread, twenty oxen, a hundred ſheep, ſix hundred fowls, fifteen hundred hares, two thouſand quails, a thouſand barrels of wine, ſix thouſand peaches, &c. &c. &c. who does not ſay, "That is the mouth of a king?"

him, which, like the ancient idols he could not taſte."

While we were converſing, we croſſed two courts, and entered a very long hall, which was that for ſtrangers. One table, already ſerved in ſeveral places, ran the whole length of the hall. They honoured my great age with an armed chair; they gave us a nouriſhing ſoup, ſome pulſe, a few wild fowl, and ſome fruit, all plainly dreſſed*.

This, I ſaid, is admirable. O, how excellently are riches employed, when they feed the hungry! I find this way of thinking far more noble, and more worthy of their rank..... All paſſed with the greateſt order; a decent and animated converſation gave an additional pleaſure to this public table. The prince appeared; he gave his orders on one ſide and the other, in a noble and affable manner; he came ſmiling to me, and inquired about the age I lived in; he conjured me to be ſincere. Alas! I ſaid, your diſtant anceſtors were not ſo generous as you are; they paſſed their days in hunting* and at table;

* I have ſeen a king, entering the hotel of a prince, through a large court filled with wretches, who cried, with a languiſhing voice, "Give us ſome bread!" and after hearing their cries, without making any reply, the king and the prince have ſat down to a dinner that coſt near a million of livres.

* The chace ſhould be regarded as an ignoble, wretched diverſion; we ſhould never kill any animals but from neceſ-ſity;

table; if they killed hares, it was from idleneſs, and not to feed thoſe who had fed them; they never raiſed their minds to any great and uſeful work; they expended millions in dogs and valets, in horſes and flatterers. In a word, they followed the trade of courtiers; they abandoned the cauſe of their country.

Every one lifted up his hands in amazement: I had the greateſt difficulty to make them believe it.—"Hiſtory," they ſaid, "does not tell us this; on the contrary——" Ah! I replied, the hiſtorians were ſtill more criminal than the princes.

CHAP.

ſity; and of all employments, it is ſurely the moſt ungrateful. I always read with a repeated attention what Montaigne, Rouſſeau, and other philoſophers have wrote on the chace. I love thoſe good Indians who reſpect even the blood of animals. The natural diſpoſitions of men are painted in the ſort of pleaſures they purſue; and what a wretched pleaſure to bring down a bloody partridge from the air! to maſſacre a number of hares under their feet! to follow twenty howling dogs, and ſee them tear a poor animal! He is weak, he is innocent, he is timidity itſelf; a free inhabitant of the foreſt, he falls into the cruel jaws of his enemies, while man purſues, and pierces his heart with a javelin; the barbarian ſmiles to ſee his beauteous ſides beſmeared with blood, and the fruitleſs tears ſtream from his eyes. A diverſion like this muſt take its ſource from a heart naturally inſenſible; and the character of a hunter is that of an indifference prompt to change into cruelty.

CHAP. XXV.

THE THEATRE.

AFTER dinner, they propoſed going to the play. I always loved the theatre, and ſhall love it a thouſand years hence, if I ſhould live ſo long. My heart bounded with joy. What play is it? Which of all your dramas is reckoned the maſter-piece by the people? Shall I ſee the Perſian, Grecian, Roman, or French dreſs? Will they dethrone ſome ſtupid tyrant, or ſtab ſome weak unguarded wretch? Shall I ſee a conſpiracy or ſome ghoſt aſcend from the tomb at the ſound of thunder? But, gentlemen, have you any good actors? they have been at all times as ſcarce as great poets.—" Why, yes, they take pains; they ſtudy; they ſuffer themſelves to be inſtructed by the beſt authors, that they may not wretchedly murder the ſenſe; they are docile, though leſs illiterate than thoſe of your day. You could ſcarce, they ſay, produce one tolerable actor or actreſs; the reſt were all worthy of the booths on the Boulevards*. You had a ſmall miſerable theatre in a city that rivalled Rome and Athens; and that theatre was miſerably governed. The comedian, to whom

* The Boulevards are a part of the ancient ramparts of Paris, which in the ſummer months are lined with a great number of coffee and muſic houſes, puppet ſhews, conjurers, wild beaſts, rope dancers, and every other kind of low diverſion.

whom a fortune was given that he was far from meriting, had the insolent pride to harass the man of genius, who found himself obliged to resign to him his long-laboured piece*. These men did not blush to refuse, or play with regret, the best dramas, while those they received with rapture bore, by that very testimony, the marks of sudden reprobation. To conclude, our actors do not interest the public with the quarrels of their dirty, miserable barn.

"We have four theatres, in the middle of the four quarters of the city. They are supported by the government; for they are made public schools of taste and morality. We have discovered all that influence which the ascendency of genius has over sensible

* In France, the government is monarchical and the theatre republican¶. By their present manner of proceeding, the dramatic art will not be soon brought to perfection. I will venture to affirm, that every piece of any excellence will be proscribed by the government. Authors write tragedies on antique subjects; we must have romances, and not representations capable of affecting and instructing the nation; lull us with some old story of a cock and a bull; but do not describe modern events, and least of all such men as now exist.

¶ There are no managers, or at least separate proprietors, at either of the theatres of Paris. The whole company make one body, and divide the profits among them.

ſenſible minds*. Genius has produced the moſt wonderful effects, without labour and without violence. It is in the hands of the great poets that are depoſited, ſo to ſay, the hearts of their fellow-citizens, and which they modify after their own pleaſure. How criminal are they, when they produce dangerous principles! but how ſhort is our moſt lively acknowledgment, when they combat vice and ſupport humanity! Our dramatic authors have no other view than the improvement of human nature; they all ſtrive to elevate and ſtrengthen the mind, and to render

* At the fair, and on the ramparts, they give the people pieces that are groſs, ridiculous, and obſcene, when it were ſo eaſy to give them ſuch as are elegant, pleaſing, inſtructive, and adapted to their capacities; but it is of little concern to thoſe that govern, whether the body be poiſoned at the public houſe, by adulterated wine poured into pewter veſſels, or the mind corrupted at the fair by wretched farces. If the leſſons for theft that are given by the buffoon Nicolet, and which are regarded as ſtrokes of wit, are followed, a gibbet is preſently erected. There is even a ſentence of the police that expreſsly condemns the people to ſee licentious exhibitions, and that forbids the players of the Boulevards to perform any thing that is rational, and that out of regard to the reſpectable privileges of the king's comedians. It is in a polite age; it was in the year 1767, that this ſentence was publiſhed. With what contempt do they treat the poor people! How is their inſtruction neglected, as if there were reaſon to fear their acquiring any juſt lights! It is true, that, in return, they cull, with the greateſt nicety, the verſes that are to be pronounced on the French theatre.

render it independent and virtuous. The good citizens themselves ready and assiduous in promoting those chef-d'oeuvres that affect, interest, and enflow the heart with that salutary emotion that disposes it to compassion; the characteristic of true greatness*.

"We arrived at a spacious place, in the midst of which was situate an edifice of a majestic composition. On the top of the front were placed several allegorical figures. On the right was Thalia, plucking off the mask with which vice had covered her visage, and with her finger pointing to her deformity. On the left, Melpomene, armed with a poignard, opened the breast of a tyrant, and exposed to every eye the serpents that devoured his heart.

The inside of the theatre formed an advanced semicircle; so that the spectators were all commodiously distributed. Every one was seated; and when I recollected,

* What force, what effect, what certain triumph, would not our theatre have, if government, instead of regarding it as an asylum for idlers, would consider it as the school of virtue and of the duties of a citizen! But what have men of the greatest genius amongst us done? they have taken their subjects from the Greeks, the Romans, Persians, &c. they have presented us with foreign, or rather factitious manners. Harmonious poets, faithless painters, they have drawn ideal pictures; with their heroes, their tumid verses, their monotony of passions, and their five acts, they have depraved the dramatic art; which is nothing more than a simple, faithful, animated painting of the manners of our cotemporaries.

collected the fatigue I had formerly suffered to see a play, I found this people more prudent, more attentive to the convenience of their fellow-citizens; they had not the insolent avidity to cram in more persons than the house would conveniently hold; there were some places always left empty for strangers; the company was brilliant; the ladies were elegantly dressed, and decently disposed.

The performance opened with a symphony adapted to the piece that was to be represented. Are we at the opera? I exclaimed; this music is sublime.—"We have found the mean of uniting, without confusion, the two exhibitions in one, or rather of reviving the alliance of poetry and music that was formed by the ancients. During the interacts of our dramas, they entertain the audience with animated songs, that paint the sentiments, and dispose the mind for the enjoyment of what is going to be offered. Far from us is banished all effeminate, capricious, or noisy music, that speaks not to the heart. Your opera was a grotesque, monstrous composition. We have reserved all of it that was good. In your own time it was far from being secure from the just reproach of men of sense and taste*; but now....."

As he said these words, the curtain rose. The scene was at Toulouse; I saw its capitol, its magistrates,

* The opera cannot but be very dangerous; but there is no spectacle so expensive to government: it is even the only one about which it is interested.

trates, the judges, the executioner, and the fanatic people. The family of the unfortunate Calas appeared, and drew tears from my eyes. The old man came forward with his hoary locks, his tranquil firmness, his gentle heroism: I saw the fatal destiny mark his innocent head with all the appearance of criminality. What most affected me was the truth that ran through this drama. They had been very cautious not to disfigure this pathetic subject by improbabilities, or by the monotony of our rhiming verses; the poet, in following the steps of this cruel event, had attached himself to those incidents only which the deplorable situation of each victim produced, or rather he had borrowed their language; for all the art consists in faithfully repeating the voice of nature. At the end of the tragedy, they pointed me out: "There is the man," they said, "who was cotemporary to that unhappy age; he heard the cries of the unbridled populace, excited by this David! He was a witness to the fury of that absurd fanaticism!"—I wrapped myself up in my cloak; I hid my face, while I blushed for the age in which I was born. They gave out for the next day, the tragedy of Cromwell, or the Death of Charles I.* and all the people appeared highly pleased. "That piece," they said, "was a chef-d'oeuvre; the cause of kings and of the people, had never been represented with that force, that eloquence, and truth. Cromwell

was

* On what are you dreaming, tragedians? While such a subject offers itself, you tell us about Persians and Greeks; you give us romances in rhime; ah! give us Cromwell.

was an avenger, a hero worthy of the sceptre he caused to fall from the hand of one that was perfidious and criminal towards the state. Kings," said they, "whose hearts are disposed to injustice, can never read that drama without blanching their haughty fronts."

They announced for the second piece, The Hunting-Match of Henry IV. His name is constantly adored; future good kings have not been able to efface his memory. This piece does not show that the man disfigures the hero. The conqueror of the league never appeared to me so great as at that instant, when, to save trouble to his hosts, his victorious arm bore a pile of dishes. The people clapped their hands with transport; and by applauding the great and beneficent mind of that monarch, they heaped commendations on their own king.

I came away highly satisfied. These actors, I said to my guide, are excellent; they have souls, they feel, they express; they have nothing constrained, affected, gigantic, or outré; even the very assistants perform their parts; in fact, that is extraordinary.—"It is," he replied, "on the theatre as in common life; every one places his glory in acting well his part, which, how low soever it may be, becomes honourable to him who therein excells. Declamation is regarded as an estimable and important art by our government. Heirs of your capital works, we perform them to a perfection that would astonish you; we know how to do honour to that which genius has traced.

O, what

O, what art is more pleasing than that which paints all the combinations of sentiments by the looks, the voice, and the gesture! What an harmonious and affecting whole! and what energy does it borrow from simplicity!"—You have then divested yourselves of great prejudices? I doubt whether you regard the profession of a comedian as base.—"It has ceased to be so, since they have been men of principle. There are prejudices that are dangerous, and others that are useful. In your time, it was doubtless proper to bridle that seducing and dangerous disposition, that led youth to a profession, of which licentiousness was the basis. But all is changed; wise regulations, by making the players forget themselves, has enabled them to recover the path to honour; they are entered into the class of citizens. But lately our prelate besought the king to give the embroidered hat to a comedian by whom he had been remarkably affected."—How! does your good prelate go to the play?—"Why not, since the theatre is become the school of manners, of virtue, and sentiment? They write, that the father of the Christians amused himself highly, in the temple of God, with listening to the equivocal voices of mutilated wretches; we never hear such deplorable accents; they must afflict at once the ear and the heart. How was it possible for men to listen to such cruel music? It is far more eligible, I think, to see the admirable tragedy of Mahomet performed, where the heart of an ambitious villain is laid bare, where the furies of fanaticism are so energetically expressed, as to make uninstructed souls that have any disposition to it, tremble.

"There

"There goes the paſtor of this quarter, who, as he returns, is reaſoning with his children on the tragedy of Calas. He enlightens their underſtanding and their taſte; he abhors fanaticiſm; and when he thinks on that foul rage, which like an epidemic diſtemper, deſolated one half of Europe for twelve centuries, he thanks heaven for having arrived ſo late in the world. At certain times of the year, we enjoy a pleaſure, which to you was abſolutely unknown; we have revived the pantomime art, ſo pleaſing to the ancients. How many organs has nature given to man! and how many reſources has that intelligent being to expreſs the almoſt infinite number of his ſenſations! All is countenance with theſe eloquent men; they talk as clearly to us with their fingers as you can with your tongue. Hippocrates formerly ſaid, that the pulſe diſcovered a ruling Deity. Our expert pantomimes ſhew what magnificence Providence has uſed in forming the human head."—O, I have nothing to ſay; all is perfection!—"How is that? Much yet remains to be done ere we attain perfection. We are freed from that barbariſm in which you was plunged; ſome heads were ſoon enlightened; but the nation in general was inconſequent and puerile; it is by degrees that minds are formed; more remains to be done than we have yet accompliſhed we are ſcarce yet half-way up the ladder; patience and reſignation produce all things; but much I fear, that abſolute good is not of this world. It is, however, by conſtantly purſuing it, I imagine, that we are enabled to render matters, at leaſt, tolerable."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

THE LAMPS.

WE came out of the theatre without trouble or confusion; the passages were numerous and convenient. I beheld the streets perfectly light; the lamps were placed against the walls; and their united lustre left no shade; nor did they cast a reverberated glare that was dangerous to the sight; the opticians did not promote the interest of the oculists. I saw not at any corner those prostitutes, who, with their feet in the kennel, their painted faces, and looks as bold as their gestures, invited the passenger in a brutal stile, to an entertainment as insipid as gross. All those places of debauchery, where men went to degrade their nature, and to make themselves contemptible in their own eyes, were no longer tolerated; for every vicious institution has its fellow; they are all connected; unhappily for man, there is no truth better proved than this that is so fatal*.

I observed

* It is a great misfortune to any city to be pestered with a number of prostitutes; the youth exhaust their strength, or perish in a base or criminal debauchery; or when totally enervated, they marry, and suffer their young deluded wives to languish by their sides; as Colardeau says. "They resemble those mournful lights that burn by the dead, but are unable to warm their ashes."

Semblables a ces flambeaux, a ces lugubres feux,
Qui brulent prés des morts, sans echauffer leur cendre.

I obſerved that there were guards who preſerved the public ſecurity, and prevented any one from diſturbing the hours of repoſe.—"You there ſee," ſaid my guide, "the only ſort of ſoldiers for which we have any occaſion; we have no devouring army to maintain in time of peace. Thoſe maſtiffs, which we formerly nouriſhed, that they might, when commanded, fly upon the ſtranger, were well nigh devouring the children of the houſe; but the torch of war, once extinguiſhed, will never more be relumined; the ſovereigns of the earth have deigned to hear the voice of philoſophy*; connected by the ſtrongeſt bands,

* Charles XII. was in the hands of a governor void of ability; he mounts the throne, at an age when we are full of ſenſations, and thoſe that make the firſt impreſſions appear immutable truths; every idea ſeems good, becauſe we know not which to prefer. In this pernicious ſtate of activity and ignorance, he reads Quintus Curtius; he there ſees the character of a conquering monarch pompouſly deſcribed and propoſed as a model, which he adopts; he no longer finds any thing but war that can make a prince illuſtrious; he arms; he advances; ſome ſucceſs confirms him in his flattering paſſion; he lays waſte countries, deſtroys cities, ravages provinces and ſtates, breaks down thrones; he immortalizes his folly and his vanity. Suppoſe that he had been taught in early youth, that a king ſhould aim at nothing but the peace and proſperity of his ſubjects; that his true glory conſiſts in their love; that a peaceful heroiſm, which ſupports the laws and the arts, far out-weighs a warlike heroiſm; ſuppoſe, in ſhort, that they had given him juſt ideas of that tacit covenant which a people neceſſarily make with their king; that they had point-

ed

bands, by those of interest, which they have discovered after so many ages of error; reason has taken possession of their minds; they have attentively considered that duty which the health and tranquility of their people imposes on them; they place their glory in good government, preferring the pleasure of making a small number happy to the frantic ambition of ruling over countries desolated, or filled with ulcerated hearts, to whom the power of a conqueror must for ever be odious. These kings, by common consent, have fixed bounds to their dominions, and such as nature itself seems to have assigned, in separating them by seas, by forests, or mountains; they have learned that a kingdom of but small extent is susceptible of the best form of government. The sages of each nation dictated the general treaty, and it was confirmed by an unanimous voice; that which an age of iron, and dirt, and that which a man without virtue called the dream of a pedant, has been realized among the most enlightened and discerning of mankind. Those ancient prejudices, not less dangerous, that divided men on account of their belief, are also abolished. We regard all men as our friends and brethren. The Indian and the Chinese

ed out to him the conquerors blasted by the tears of their cotemporaries, and by the hatred of posterity: his innate love of glory would have been carried toward useful objects; he would have employed his abilities in polishing his people and establishing their happiness; he would not have ravaged Poland, but have governed Sweden. Thus, one false idea, taking possession of the mind of a monarch, carries him away from his true interest, and is the cause of misery to millions of people.

Chineſe are our countrymen, when they once ſet foot on our land. We teach our children to regard all mankind as compoſing one and the ſame family, aſſembled under the eye of one common father. This manner of thinking muſt be the beſt, becauſe it has prevailed with inconceivable rapidity. Excellent works, wrote by men of ſublime genius, have ſerved as ſo many torches to illumine a thouſand others. Men, by encreaſing their knowledge, have learned to love and eſteem each other. The Engliſh, as our neareſt neighbours, are become our intimate allies; two generous people no longer hate each other by fooliſhly eſpouſing the private animoſities of their rulers. Our learning and arts unite us in a communication equally advantageous. The Engliſh, for example, full of reflection, have improved the French, who abound in levity; and we Frenchmen have diſſipated ſurpriſingly the melancholy humour of the Engliſh; thus the mutual exchange has produced a fruitful ſource of conveniences, of pleaſures, and of new ideas, happily received and adopted. It is printing* that, by enlightening mankind, has produced this grand revolution."

I ſprung

* It has another excellence; it is the formidable bridle to arbitrary power, by making public its leaſt encroachments, by ſuffering nothing to be concealed, and by eternizing the vices and even the weakneſs of kings. One remarkable act of injuſtice is by this means echoed through all the nations of the earth, and rouſes every free and ſenſible mind. The friend to virtue will cheriſh this art; but the bad man muſt tremble, when he ſees the preſs ready to publiſh his iniquities to all ages and all nations.

I ſprung with joy to embrace the man who told me theſe gladſome tidings. O heaven! I cried with tranſport, then mankind are at laſt become worthy of thy regard; they have diſcovered that their real ſtrength is in their union. I ſhall die content, ſince my eyes now behold what they have ſo ardently deſired. How ſweet it is when we abandon life, to be ſurrounded by happy mortals who meet each other like brothers, who, after a long voyage, are going to rejoin the author of their days!

CHAP. XXVII.

THE FUNERAL.

I SAW a carriage covered with white cloth, preceded by inſtruments of muſic, and crowned with triumphant palms. It was conducted by men clothed in light blue, with laurels in their hands.—What carriage is that? I ſaid.—"It is the chariot of victory," they replied. "They that have quitted this life; that have triumphed over human miſeries, thoſe happy men that have rejoined the ſupreme Being, the ſource of all good, are regarded as conquerors; we hold them as ſacred; we bear their bodies with reſpect to the place that is to be their eternal reſidence. We ſing the hymn on the contempt of death. Inſtead of thoſe grim ſculls that crowned your tombs, you here will ſee heads with a ſmiling air; it is with

that aſpect we regard death. No one weeps over the inſenſible aſhes. We weep for ourſelves; not for them. We conſtantly adore the hand of Providence, that has taken them from the world. As we muſt ſubmit to the irrevocable law of nature, why ſhould we not freely embrace that peaceful ſtate, which cannot but improve our being*.

This corpſe is going to be reduced to aſhes at three miles from the city; furnaces conſtantly burning for that purpoſe, conſume our mortal remains. Two dukes and a prince are encloſed in that chariot with a common citizen. By death all are levelled; and we then reſtore that equality which nature has obſerved among her children. This wiſe cuſtom diminiſhes, in the minds of the people, the dread of death, at the ſame time that it humbles the pride of the great. They then are only great in proportion to their virtue; the reſt, dignities, riches, honours, are all effaced. The corruptible matter that compoſed their bodies is not them; it goes to be mixt with the aſhes of their equals; we annex no other idea to the periſhable carcaſe.

We erect no pompous tombs, decorated with falſe, tumid, and puerile epitaphs†. Our kings, after their deceaſe,

* He that is in great fear of death, if he be not of a conſtitution remarkably timorous, is certainly a bad man.

† O death, I bleſs thy power! It is thou that felleſt the tyrants of the earth; that bridleſt cruelty and ambition; it

deceaſe, do not fill their ſpacious palaces with an imaginary terror; they are no more flattered at their deaths than during their lives. When they leave the earth, their icy hands do not ſnatch from us a part of our ſubſiſtence; they die without involving a city in ruin*.

To prevent all accidents, no dead body is removed till the viſitor has fixed on it the ſeal of death. This viſitor is a man of known ability, who remarks, at the ſame time, the age, ſex, and the diſeaſe of the deceaſed; they print in the public papers the name of the phyſician by whom he was attended. If in the book of reflection, that each man, as I have ſaid, leaves at his death, there be any thing truly great or uſeful, they are ſelected and publiſhed, and that is the only funeral oration in uſe amongſt us.

It

it is thou that layeſt in the duſt thoſe that the world had flattered, and that treated mankind with contempt; they fall, and we breathe. Without thee our miſeries would be eternal. O, death! Who holdeſt in awe the inexorable and the triumphant, who pierceſt the guilty ſouls with terror; thou hope of the unfortunate; at length extend thy arm over the perſecutors of my country. And you, devouring inſects, that people the ſepulchres, our friends, our avengers, come in crowds to receive the carcaſes of thoſe that have fattened by their crimes.

* To that funeral pomp which oſtentatiouſly conveys a king to an obſcure cavern, to thoſe mournful ceremonies, to thoſe numerous emblems of public grief, of univerſal mourning, what is there wanting?—One ſincere tear.

It is a salutary belief received amongst us, that the spirit has the liberty of frequenting those places that were dear to it; that it delights in beholding those it loved; that it hangs in silence over their heads, contemplating the lively sorrow of friendship; that it does not lose that sympathy, that tenderness which formerly united it to sensible hearts; that it finds a pleasure in their presence, and in protecting them from those dangers that surround their tender frames. These benign manes correspond to your guardian angels. This opinion so pleasing and consolatory, inspires us with a confidence, as well in undertaking as executing, that was unknown to you; who, far, from enjoying these delightful conceptions, filled your imaginations with gloomy and frightful chimeras.

You can easily perceive with what a profound veneration such an opinion inspires a young man, who having lately lost his father, believes [illegible] that he is still a witness of his most secret actions. He talks to him in solitude; he becomes animated by that awful presence which enjoins him to virtuous actions; and if he finds himself tempted to evil, he says, "My father sees me! My father hears me*!"

The young man dries up his tears, because the horrible idea of inanity does not afflict his soul; it seems to

* An opinion like this should seem superfluous to him who knows, that the great Father of the universe is perpetually present to all his actions; but, alas, the human mind seems incapable of retaining that great idea for any long time together.

to him that the ſhades of his anceſtors only wait for his coming that they may advance together toward the eternal abode. And who can deny himſelf the hopes of immortality! Were it even an illuſion, would it not be pleaſing and awful to us?

I think it will not be improper to add here the following reflections, as they correſpond with the preceding chapter, and may ſerve to explain it. They are in the manner of Young, though compoſed in French.

AN ECLIPSE OF THE MOON.

(It is a Solitary that ſpeaks.)

I INHABIT a ſmall country houſe, that contributes not a little to my happineſs. It has two different proſpects. One is extended over fertile plains, where grows that precious grain that is the nouriſhment of man. The other, more confined, preſents the laſt aſylum of the human race; the term that bounds its pride; a narrow ſpace, where the hand of death lays up, with equal care, its peaceful victims.

The proſpect of this cemetry far from producing gloomy ideas, the children of a vulgar terror, rouſes in my mind wiſe and uſeful reflections. There I no longer hear the tumult of the town, which confounds the mind. Attended by none but auguſt melancholy, I am filled with important objects. I look, with an eye, ſerene and immoveable, on that tomb where man ſleeps to riſe again; when he ſhall acknowledge

the munificence of nature, and justify the eternal Wisdom.

The pompous glare of day to me seems dull; I wait the dawn of night, and that sweet obscurity, which lending its charms to silence, aids the soaring of sublimest thought. Then, while the bird of night sending forth a mournful cry, beats the thick darkness with her heavy wing, I seize my lyre. All hail! majestic shades! while from my eyes you hide the transient scenes of this low world, to nobler sights exalt my soul; let me behold that radiant throne, where sits resplendent Truth!

My ear pursues the solitary bird; soon she settles on the scattered bones; and with her beating wing rolls, with a hollow sound, that scull where lately dwelt ambition, pride, and projects bold and vain. Then to some cold stone she flies, where ostentation graved those names that time hath quite effaced; and then to poverty's fair hillock, crowned with flowers.

Dust of proud man! that never more shall see this earth, to empty titles darest thou still pretend? O miserable pride in death's domain! See, where the coffin, with its threefold sides, forbids the mouldering bones to mingle with their kindred dust.

Approach, proud mortal! to yonder tombs direct thy sight. Say, what imports a name to that which knows no name! A false epitaph exposes to the day

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that wretched praiſe, which were far better in oblivion's ſhade concealed; even as the gaudy ſtreamer for a moment floats, and then the veſſel follows, by the waves devoured.

O! far more happy he, that not vain pyramids hath built, but in the path of honour and of virtue conſtant trod. He joyful looks to heaven; and when this fragile frame diſſolves, where ſwarms of pains diſtract the immortal ſoul, he gladly meets that ſtroke, which fills the ſinner with diſmay. By oft reflecting on the bright example of the expiring juſt, we alſo learn to die.

He dies, the juſt man dies: he ſees thoſe tears that not for him, but for ourſelves we ſhed. His brethren ſurround the mournful bed: Of thoſe delightful truths they talk, with which his ſoul was filled, and of that Power Divine to him revealed ſo clear. The immortal curtain ſeemed to riſe before his dying ſight. . . . . He raiſed his radiant head, ſtretched forth his friendly hand, he ſmiled, and then expired.

But thou, vile ſinner! thou who in ſucceſsful villainy haſt lived, far different thy end ſhall be, thou horrid tyrant! Then agonizing, pale, to thee ſhall death preſent a dreadful aſpect; of his bitter cup ſhalt thou drink deep, drink in all its horrors. Thou canſt not lift thy eyes to heaven, nor fix them on the earth; for well thou knoweſt that both renounce, that both reject thee. Expire in terrors, that thou mayeſt no longer live in hatred!

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That moment dire, which turns the sinner pale, the good man placid views; to nature's fixed decrees he tranquil yields; these tombs regards as vessels formed to purge, by fire, the purer gold from every dross; the mortal frame dissolves, and to the blissful regions flies the soul refined. Then why regard with dread those cold remains that once confined the soul? They rather should remind us of its happy flight. The antique temple somewhat of its pristine majesty preserves, even when in ruins hurled.

Penetrated with a sacred respect for the ruins of humanity, I descended to that earth strewed with the holy ashes of my brethren. The calm, the silence, the cold immobility, all said to me, *They sleep*. I advanced, I avoided treading upon the grave of a friend but just filled up; I recollected myself, that I might revere his memory; I stopped; I listened attentively, as wishing to catch some of those sounds which might chance to escape from that celestial harmony he now enjoys in the heavens. The planet of the night, in her full lustre, poured her silver beams upon the mournful scene. I lifted my eyes toward the firmament of heaven. They roll, those worlds innumerable, those flaming suns so profusely spread through all the ethereal space. Then again my sight was fixed on that silent grave, where perish the eyes, the tongue, the heart of him with whom I had conversed on these sublime wonders, and who extolled the Author of these transcendent miracles.

Suddenly there came on an eclipse of the moon, which I had not foreseen. I was not even sensible

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of it till the darkneſs began to ſurround me. I could then diſcern a ſmall ſhining ſpace only that the ſhadow haſtened to cover. A profound darkneſs ſtopped my ſteps; I could no longer diſcover any object; I loſt the path; I turned a hundred times; the gate ſeemed to ſhun me; the clouds gathered; the winds whiſtled; I heard a diſtant thunder; it arrived with uproar on the wings of the lightening; my mind was confounded; I ſhivered; I ſtumbled over the ſcattered bones; terror precipitated my ſteps; I came to a tomb juſt opened to receive the dead; I fell in; the grave received me living; I found myſelf buried in the humid entrails of the earth; I ſeemed to hear the voice of all the dead that hailed my arrival; an icy trembling ſeized me; a cold ſweat came over me; I ſunk into a lethargic ſlumber.

Why did I not die in that peaceful ſtate? I was already entombed; the curtain that conceals eternity was drawn up. I do not regard this life with horror; I know how to enjoy it: I endeavour to render it uſeful; but all cries out from the bottom of my heart, that the future life is preferable to the preſent.

I recovered, however, my ſenſations. A faint light began to brighten the ſtarry vault; ſome ſcattering rays pierced through the clouds; by degrees they became more bright; they diſperſed, and I perceived the moon half diſengaged from the ſhadow; at length it ſhone with all its former luſtre; that ſolitary planet purſued its courſe. My ſpirits return-

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ed, and I ſprung from the grave. The freſhneſs of the air, the ſerenity of the ſky, the bluſhing rays of the morning, all re-animated me, and diſſipated thoſe terrors that night had produced.

I then regarded with a ſmile, the grave that had received me into its boſom. What was there frightful in it? It was the earth from whence I ſprung, and that demanded, after a time, the portion of clay it had lent me. I then ſaw none of thoſe phantoms that the darkneſs had impreſſed on my credulous imagination. It is that, that alone, which produces inauſpicious images. I expected, in this accident, to have known what was death. I fell into the grave with the terror of that which is, perhaps the ſole ſupport againſt the troubles of this life; but there I only experienced a gentle and, in ſome degree, even a pleaſing ſlumber. If this ſcene was terrible, it laſted but a moment; it ſcarce exiſted for me. I awaked to the brightneſs of a ſerene and pleaſing day. I have baniſhed a childiſh terror, and joy has taken poſſeſſion of my whole heart. So after that tranſient ſleep, which men call death, we ſhall awake to behold the ſplendor of that eternal ſun, that by elucidating the immenſe ſyſtem of beings, ſhall diſcover to us the folly of our timorous prejudices, and an inexhauſtible and unknown ſource of felicity, whoſe courſe nothing can ever interrupt.

Therefore, mortal, that thou mayeſt dread nothing, be virtuous! Whilſt thou paſſeſt through the ſhort path of life, put thy heart in a condition to ſay to thee,

thee, "Fear nothing; advance under the eye of a "God, that is the univerſal father of mankind; in- "ſtead of regarding him with terror, adore his "bounty, and rely on his clemency; have the confi- "dence of a ſon that loves, and not the terror of a "ſlave that trembles, becauſe he is guilty.

CHAP. XXVIII.

THE KING'S LIBRARY.

AN unlucky door, placed near to my pillow, by creeking on its hinges, totally diſconcerted my ideas. I loſt ſight of my guide, and of the city; but as the mind is continually agitated by the ſcene that has once made a ſtrong impreſſion, I happily returned to my dream. I was now quite alone; it was broad day; and by a natural propenſity I found myſelf in the king's library; but more than once was I under the neceſſity of aſſuring myſelf that it was ſo.

In the room of thoſe four galleries of an immenſe length, and which contained many thouſands of volumes, I could only find one ſmall cloſet, in which were ſeveral books that ſeemed to me far from voluminous. Surpriſed at ſo great a change, I ventured to aſk if ſome fatal conflagration had not devoured that rich collection.—"Yes," they replied, "It was

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" a conflagration; but by our hands was it design-
" edly illumined."—Perhaps I have forgot to tell you, that theſe are the moſt affable people in the world; that they ſhew a very particular regard for age; and that they do not reply to enquiries, in the manner of the French, by anſwering with a queſtion. The Librarian who was a man of real learning, preſented himſelf to me; and well conſidering all the objections, as well as reproaches that I made, he gave me the following account. "Convinced, by the moſt ſtrict obſervation that the mind is embaraſſed by a thouſand extrinſic difficulties, we were ſenſible that a numerous library was the ſeat of the greateſt extravagancies and the moſt idle chimeras. In your time, to the diſgrace of reaſon, men firſt wrote and then thought.—We follow the oppoſite courſe; and have therefore deſtroyed all thoſe authors who buried their thoughts under a monſtrous heap of words or phraſes.

" Nothing leads the mind farther aſtray than bad books; for the firſt notions being adopted without attention, the ſecond become precipitate concluſions; and men thus go on from prejudice to prejudice, and from error to error. What remained for us to do, but to rebuild the ſtructure of human knowledge? This project appeared of infinite labour; but, in fact, we found it only neceſſary to deſtroy thoſe uſeleſs fabrics that hid from us the true point of view; as the Louvre became a new building by ſweeping away the ruins that ſurrounded it. The ſciences, amidſt this labyrinth of books, were in a perpetual circulation,

tion, returning inceſſantly to the ſame point; and the exaggerated idea of their riches ſerved only to conceal their real indigence.

"In fact, what did that multitude of volumes contain? For the moſt part, nothing more than perpetual repetitions of the ſame thing. Philoſophy preſented itſelf to us under the image of a ſtatue, always celebrated, always copied, but never embelliſhed; it appeared ſtill more perfect in the original. It ſeemed to degenerate in all the copies of ſilver and gold that have ſince been made of it; doubtleſs, it was more beautiful when carved in wood by a hand almoſt ſavage, than when covered with extrinſic ornaments. Since men, from a wretched indolence, have given themſelves up to the opinion of others, they have neceſſarily become more ſervile imitators, deſtitute of invention and originality. What immenſe projects, what ſublime ſpeculations, have been extinguiſhed by the breath of opinion! Time has brought down to us nothing but thoſe empty, glaring notions that have been applauded by the multitude, while it has ſwallowed up thoſe ſtrong and bold thoughts, which were too ſimple to pleaſe the vulgar.

"As our days are ſhort, and ought not to be conſumed in a puerile philoſophy, we have given a deciſive ſtroke to the miſerable controverſies of the ſchools."—What have you done? Proceed if you pleaſe.—"By an unanimous conſent, we brought together, on a vaſt plain, all thoſe books which we

judged either frivolous, useless, or dangerous; of these we formed a pyramid, that resembled, in height and bulk, an enormous tower; it was certainly another Babel. Journals crowned this strange edifice; and it was covered, on all sides, with ordinances of bishops, remonstrances of parliaments, petitions, and funeral orations; it was composed of five or six hundred thousand commentators, of eight hundred thousand volumes of law, of fifty thousand dictionaries, of a hundred thousand poems, of sixteen hundred thousand voyages and travels, and of a millard* of romances. This tremendous mass was set on fire, and offered as an expiatory sacrifice to veracity, to good sense, and true taste. The flames greedily devoured the follies of mankind, as well ancient as modern; the fire continued long. Some authors saw themselves burning alive; their cries, however, could not extinguish the flames. We found notwithstanding, amidst the embers, some page of the works of P——, of De la H——, of the abbé A——; for they were so extremely frigid, that the fire could have no effect on them.

"We have therefore done from an enlightened zeal, what the barbarians once did from one that was blind: however, as we are neither unjust, nor like the Saracens, who heated their baths with the chief d'oeuvres of literature, we have made an election; those of the greatest judgment amongst us have extracted the substance of thousands of volumes, which

* A thousand millions.

which they have included in a small duodecimo; not unlike those skillful chemists, who concentre the virtues of many plants in a small phial, and cast aside the refuse*.

"We have abridged what seemed of most importance; the best have been reprinted; and the whole corrected according to the true principles of morality. Our composers are a set of men estimable and dear to the nation; to knowledge they have added taste; and as they are capable of producing, they have made a judicious selection. We have remarked, to speak justly, that it appertains to the ages of philosophy only, to produce a small number of works. In yours, when real knowledge was not sufficiently established, it was necessary to bring together a great number of materials. The labourer must work before the architect.

"At

* On this globe, all is revolution: the minds of men vary to an infinity the national character, alter books, and make them no longer to be known. Is there any one author, if he reflects, that can reasonably indulge himself in the hope of not being despised by the next generation? Do we not deride our ancestors? Can we say what progress our children may make? Have we any idea of the secrets that may suddenly spring from out of the bosom of nature? Do we completely know the extent of the human understanding? Where is the work that is founded on a real knowledge of the human heart, on the nature of things, on right reason? Does not our physics present us an ocean with whose coasts we are yet scarce acquainted? How ridiculous, therefore, is that pride, which ignorantly pretends to prescribe the bounds of any art.

"At the beginning, each science is treated in part; every one applies his attention to that portion which has fallen to his lot. By this method the smallest details are observed; nothing can escape. It was necessary for you to make an innumerable quantity of books; it is our business to collect the scattered parts. The ignorant babble eternally; the learned and sagacious speak little, but well.

"This closet, that you see, contains those books that have escaped the flames. Their number is small; but by their merit they have obtained the approbation of our age."

I approached with curiosity: and on examining the first division, I found that of the Greeks, they had preserved Homer, Sophocles, Euripides, Demosthenes, Plato, and particularly our friend Plutarch; but they had burned Herodotus, Sappho, Anacreon, and the vile Aristophanes. I would have defended in some, degree the cause of Anacreon; but I was answered by the best reasons in the world, though such as I shall not here mention, because they would not be intelligible to the present age.

In the second division appropriated to the Latin authors, I found Virgil, Pliny, and Titus Livy* entire; but they had burned Lucretius, except some poetic passages, because his physics they found false,

* I have lately read this historian again; and I am convinced, that the virtue of the Romans consisted in sacrificing the human race on the altar of their country. As citizens, they are to be applauded; as men, to be abhorred.

and

and his morals dangerous. They had deſtroyed the tedious pleadings of Cicero, an able rhetor rather than a man of eloquence; but they had preſerved his philoſophic works, one of the moſt precious productions of antiquity. Salluſt alſo remained. Ovid and Horace* were purged; the odes of the latter appeared far inferior to his Epiſtles. Seneca was reduced to one fourth part. Tacitus was preſerved; but, as his writings breath a dark vapour that blackens the human race, and as we ought not to nouriſh a baſe idea of mankind, for tyrants are not of their number, the reading of this profound author was permitted to thoſe only whoſe hearts were well formed. Catullus and Petronius had vaniſhed in ſmoke. Quintilian was reduced to a volume of the ſmalleſt ſize.

The third diviſion contained the Engliſh authors, and here I found the greateſt number of volumes. Here I ſaw all thoſe philoſophers that warlike, commerciant, and politic iſle hath produced; Milton, Shakeſpeare, Pope, Young†, and Richardſon, here ſtill

* This writer had all the delicacy, all the flowers of wit, every poſſible urbanity; he has, nevertheleſs, been too much admired in every age. His muſe inſpires a voluptuous repoſe, a lethargic ſlumber, a pliant and dangerous indifference; it therefore, muſt pleaſe the courtier and effeminate mind, whoſe whole morality is confined to the preſent moment, and to the enjoyment of ſoft and ſolitary pleaſures.

† M. Tourneur had publiſhed a tranſlation of this poet, which has had the greateſt and moſt determined ſucceſs. Eve-

still enjoyed their full renown; their creative genius knew no restraint, while we are obliged to measure all our words; the fruitful energy of those free souls was

ry one has read this moral work; *(the author must here allude to the Night Thoughts,)* every one admires that sublime language, which elevates, cheers, and captivates the soul; because it is founded on great truths, presents great objects only, and derives all its dignity from their real grandeur. For my own part, I have never read any thing so original, so new, nor even so interesting. I admire that profound sentiment, which, though always the same, yet has an infinity of connexions and diversities; it is a stream by which I am borne down; I am pleased with those strong and lively images whose boldness corresponds with the subject to which they are applied. We there see, moreover, the most demonstrative proofs of the immortality of the soul; in no part is the mind so much struck as in this; the poet attacks the heart, subdues it, and deprives it of all power of contradiction; such is the magic of expression, the force of eloquence, that it leaves a poignant sensation in the mind.

Young is in the right, in my judgment, (though in the translator's note, censure has extorted a different opinion) when he asserts, that, without the prospect of eternity and future rewards, virtue would be but a name, a chimera: *Aut virtus nomen inane est, aut decus et pretium recte petit experiens vir.* What is that good from which there results no good, either in this world or in the other? What good results, in this world, from virtue to suffering innocence? Ask of a dying Brutus, a Cato, a Socrates. You there see stoicism at its last proof, and there it fairly discovers the vanity of the sect. I remember, and ever shall remember, a striking expression of J. J. Rousseau to a friend of mine. He was speaking of a proposition made to him of making

his

was the admiration of a difficult age. That futile reproach we make them, of their want of taſte, was diſregarded by men, who, charmed with juſt and ſtrong ideas, could read with aſſiduity, and knew how

his fortune by a means that was diſgraceful, but of a nature to be kept ſecret. "Sir," he ſaid, "thank God, I am not a materialiſt; if I were, I ſhould not be worth more than all of them are. I know of no reward, but that which is attached to virtue."

I freely confeſs, that I am not more worthy than Rouſſeau; and would to God, that I were as worthy! but, if I thought myſelf altogether mortal, I would inſtantly become my own deity; I would make all things ſubſervient to my divinity, that is, to myſelf: I would practiſe what they call virtue, when it promoted my pleaſure; and, in like manner, vice. I would rob to day, to give to my friend or miſtreſs; quarrel with, and rob them to morrow, to gratify ſome trifling pleaſure; and in all this I ſhould act very conſequentially, becauſe I ſhould always do that which is agreeable to my divinity; whereas, by loving virtue for the ſake of a reward, and that reward not being attached to arbitrary actions, I I am obliged to govern myſelf, not by momentary inclination, but by that invariable rule which the Eternal Legiſlator and Remunerator has preſcribed. It will therefore frequently happen, that I muſt do what I ought, though not what I pleaſe; and, if my liberty decides for that which is right, in oppoſition to a contrary inclination, then I do that which I would, not that with which I am pleaſed. If it had been the will of God to direct us by a love for goodneſs only, he would have given us a rational mind, without having added the ſenſibility of the heart; but he guides us by the proſpect of rewards, becauſe he has made us liable to paſſions and affections.

how to meditate on what they had read. They had, however, cut off from the philoſophers thoſe dangerous ſceptics who would have ſhaken the foundations of morality; that virtuous people, influenced by what they felt, diſdained ſuch vain ſubtilities; for no argument could convince them that virtue was a chimera.

In the fourth diviſion were the Italian authors. The Jeruſalem Delivered, that moſt beautiful of all poems, was at the head of them. They had, however, burned a whole library of criticiſms againſt that enchanting poem. The celebrated Treatiſe on Crimes and Puniſhments had received all the perfection of which that important work was ſuſceptible. I was agreeably ſurpriſed to ſee a number of judicious and philoſophic works, which had aroſe from out the boſom of that nation. They had broke that taliſman which ſeemed to promiſe a perpetuity of ignorance and ſuperſtition amongſt them.

At laſt, I came to the French writers. I haſtily ſeized the firſt three volumes; they were Deſcartes, Montaigne, and Charron. Montaigne had ſuffered ſome retrenchment; but as he is the philoſopher, who of all others was the beſt acquainted with human nature, his writings were preſerved, though all his ideas are not abſolutely irreproachable. The viſionary Mallebranche, the gloomy Nicole, the unpitying Arnauld, and the cruel Bourdaloue, they had burned. All that related to ſcholaſtic diſputes was ſo completely deſtroyed, that when I ſpoke of the

the Provençial Letters and the deſtruction of the Jeſuits, the learned librarian made a very great anachroniſm, of which I informed him, and received a candid acknowledgment. I could never meet with thoſe Provençial Letters, nor the moſt modern hiſtory of that grand affair; they talked of the Jeſuits, as we at this day do of the Druids.

Into an oblivion, from whence they ſhould never come forth, were caſt that crowd of thelogians called fathers of the church, writers the moſt ſophiſtic, the moſt whimſical, obſcure, and irrational, that were ever diametrically oppoſed to Locke or Clerke. "They ſeem," ſaid the librarian, "to have ſet bounds to human inſanity."

I ſearched for, I examined the authors of my acquaintance. Heavens! what deſtruction! what mighty works evaporated in ſmoke! Where is that famous Bouſſet, who, in my time, figured in fourteen quarto volumes? I was anſwered, "They are all vaniſhed."—What! that eagle who ſoared to the higheſt regions of the air, that genius——"What, in conſcience could we preſerve? That he had genius we allow*; but to a wretched uſe did he apply it.

We

* What benefit might not human reaſon have received from ſuch men as Luther, Calvin, Melancton, Eraſmus, Bouſſet, Paſchal, Arnauld, Nicole, &c. if they had employed their genius in attacking the errors of the human mind, in improving morality, legiſlation and phyſics, inſtead of oppoſing or eſtabliſhing ridiculous dogmas!

We have adopted the maxim of Montaigne: *Let us not inquire who is the moſt learned, but who is the beſt learned.* The univerſal hiſtory of that Bouſſet was nothing more than a miſerable ſkeleton of chronology*. It had beſide, a turn ſo affected, and there were ſo many reflections of immoderate length, that accompanied that meagre production, that we can ſcarce think it was read for more than half a century."—But, at leaſt, his Funeral Orations—"We are highly incenſed againſt them; they breathe the miſerable language of ſervitude and adulation. Shall a miniſter of the God of peace, of the God of truth, mount the pulpit to extol a gloomy politician, an avaricious ſtateſman, a mean woman, a blood-thirſty hero; and agitated like a poet with the deſcription of a battle, never utter one ſigh when thinking on that horrid ſcourge that deſolates the earth. At that moment, he has no thought of maintaining the laws of humanity, of declaring to an ambitious monarch, by the ſacred voice of religion, ſtrong and terrible truths; he rather wiſhes to hear it ſaid, *That man talks well; he makes the encomiums of the dead, while their aſhes*

* To give an air of truth to chronology, they have formed certain epochs; and on this deluſive foundation they have erected that imaginary ſcience, which has been entirely directed by caprice. They know not to what period they ſhould refer the principal revolutions of the world, and yet they would fix the age in which each king reigned. The greateſt errors reſt ſecure by means of chronological calculations. They ſet out, for example, from the foundation of Rome; and that foundation is ſupported by probabilities, or rather ſuppoſitions.

aſhes are yet warm. With much better reaſon would he give a good doſe of incenſe to monarchs that are ſtill living.

"We are no friends to Bouſſet; for he was not only a man proud and obdurate, a courtier fawning and ambitious, but to him alſo we owe thoſe funeral orations, which have ſince multiplied like funeral torches, and which, like them, exhale a noxious vapour as they paſs. This ſpecies of flattery appears to us the moſt odious, futile, and dangerous of all others; for it is at once falſe, ſtupid, and ſhameleſs, and conſtantly contradicts the public voice, which echoes againſt thoſe walls where the orator, whilſt pompouſly declaiming, inwardly laughs at thoſe falſe colours with which he has dreſſed out his idol.

"Behold his rival, his gentle and modeſt conqueror, the amiable, the pathetic Fenelon. His Telemachus and other works we have carefully preſerved, becauſe in them we find a rare and happy agreement between reaſon and ſenſibility*. To have

*compoſed

* The French academy have propoſed his eulogy as the next prize for eloquence; but if the work be what it ought to be, the academy cannot crown the diſcourſe. Why give ſubjects that cannot be treated in their full extent? I admire, however, this ſpecies of writing, where, by inveſtigating the genius of a great man, the art itſelf is inveſtigated and exemplified. We have had excellent works of this kind, and eſpecially thoſe of M. Thomas, which is the

compoſed the Telemachus at the court of Lewis XIV. appears to us an admirable, aſtoniſhing virtue. Certainly that monarch did not comprehend the book: and that is the moſt favourable ſuppoſition we can make for his honour. Doubtleſs, that work required a more extenſive knowledge, a more profound penetration; but, with all its ſimplicity, what force, what truth, what dignity is there diſplayed! We have placed next to his, the works of the good abbé St. Pierre, whoſe pen was weak, but his heart ſublime. Seven ages have given to his great and beautiful ideas a juſt maturity. His cotemporaries regarded him as a viſionary: his dreams, however, have become realities."

Among the French poets, I found Corneille, Racine, and Moliere; but their commentators were burned*. I aſked a queſtion of the librarian, that will probably be aſked ſeven centuries hence. To which

the moſt inſtructive book we can put into the hands of a young man, and from which he may draw at once uſeful knowledge and a rational love for glory.

* They are the works of envy or ignorance. Theſe commentators, with their zeal for the laws of grammar, excite my pity. The worſt deſtiny that can attend any man of genius, either living or dead, is to be judged by pedantiſm, which ſees nothing, and feels nothing. Theſe wretched critics, who creep from word to word, reſemble thoſe purblind mortals, who miſerably pore over every ſtroke of a picture of Le Seuer or Pouſſin, inſtead of embracing the whole at one view.

which of the three do you give the preference?—"We underſtand but little of Moliere," he replied; "the manners that he painted are paſt; he ſeems to us to have attacked ridicule more than vice, and you had more vicious than ridiculous qualities*. For the two tragedians, whoſe colours are more durable, I know not how a man of your age can aſk the queſtion. He who excelled all others in painting the human heart, who elevated and enlarged the mind to the greateſt degree; he who was the beſt acquainted with the ſhocks of paſſion and the depths of policy, had doubtleſs more genius than his harmonious rival†, who, with a ſtyle more correct and flowing, had leſs of force and conciſion, who had not the piercing view, nor the elevation, nor the fire, nor the argument, nor the amazing diverſity of characters, of the other. Add to this the moral aim, conſtantly marked in Corneille, and which drove mankind towards the element of every virtue, towards

* It is not true, as advanced in the eulogy on Moliere, that the cure of the ridiculous is more eaſy than that of the vicious. But, if it were, to which diſorder of the human heart ſhould we firſt apply remedies? Shall the poet become an accomplice in the general perverſity, and be the firſt to adopt thoſe miſerable compacts, which bad men make the better to diſguiſe their villainy? Unhappy is he who does not ſee the full effect that an excellent drama can produce, who is ignorant of the ſublimity of that ſcience which can unite all hearts in one.

† Corneille has frequently an original air of freedom and ſimplicity, and even ſomething more natural than Racine.

wards liberty. Racine, after effeminating his heroes, effeminated the spectators*. Taste is the art of elevating low subjects; and in this Corneille was inferior to Racine. Time, that sovereign judge, who equally destroys both eulogies and censures, time has declared, and has placed a wide distance between them; the one is a genius of the first order; the other, some few passages borrowed from the Greek excepted, is nothing more than a fine writer, as was observed in his own age. In your time, men had no longer the same energy; they required finished works, and the great has ever a certain roughness attending it; style was then become the principal merit, as is constantly the case with those nations that are enfeebled and corrupted."

I here found the terrible Crebillon, who has painted crimes in all those frightful colours by which they are characterised. This people sometimes read his works, but never suffer them to be acted.

It is easy to be imagined, that I recollected my friend Fontaine, equally beloved and constantly read.

* Racine and Boileau were two dastardly courtiers, who approached their monarch with the awe of two tradesmen of the Rue St. Dennis. It was not so that Horace frequented Augustus. Nothing can be more mean than the letters of these two poets, in raptures to find themselves at the court. It is difficult to conceive of more miserable productions. Racine at last died of chagrin, because Louis XIV. cast a contemptuous look at him in the public walks.

read*. Moliere, that juſt judge of merit, preſented this firſt of moral poets with immortality. Fable, it is true, is the allegorical language of a ſlave, who dares not talk to his maſter; but at the ſame time, as it moderates that ſeverity which there may be in truth, it muſt conſtantly be highly valuable in a world expoſed to all ſorts of tyrants. Satire is, perhaps, the weapon of deſpair alone.

How far has this age placed that inimitable fabuliſt above Boileau†, who, (as the abbé Coſtard ſays) made himſelf the dictator of Parnaſſus, and who, void of invention, force, grace, and ſentiment, was nothing more than a tame and ſcrupulous verſifier. They had preſerved ſeveral other fables, among which were ſome by La Motte, and thoſe of Nivernois‡.

The

* Fontaine was the confidant of nature, and merited, by pre-eminence, the title of poet. I am ſurpriſed at the audacity of thoſe who have ſince wrote fables with the preſumption of imitating him.

† The critic who only endeavours to depreciate an author, inſtead of explaining him, diſcovers his own vanity, ignorance, and jealouſy. His malignity will not let him clearly diſcern the good and bad parts of a book. Criticiſm belongs to them only whoſe judgment and candour are not, in any degree, infected by perſonal intereſt. Critic, know thyſelf; and if thou wouldſt form a right judgment of any work, remember, that depending on thy own lights only, thou canſt judge of nothing.

‡ Seven hundred years hence, it will not be remembered, perhaps, that this charming fabuliſt was a duke, and

The poet Rouſſeau made a diminutive figure: they had preſerved ſome of his odes and cantatas, but all his gloomy epiſtles, his tedious and dry allegories, his Mandragora, his epigrams, the work of a depraved heart, had all, it is eaſy to imagine, periſhed in thoſe flames they had long deſerved. I cannot here enumerate all the ſalutary mutilations that had been made in many works otherwiſe juſtly renowned. I ſaw none of thoſe frivolous poets, who flattered themſelves that the taſte of their age, which diffuſed over the moſt ſerious ſubjects that falſe varniſh of wit which debaſes reaſon, would have preſerved them*. All theſe ſallies of a light and giddy imagination, reduced to their juſt value, were evaporated, like thoſe ſparks that ſhine with the greater luſtre only to be the ſooner extinguiſhed. All thoſe writers of romances, whether hiſtoric, moral or political, where ſcattered truths are only to be met with by chance; and thoſe in which the object is not conſidered in all its different points of view; and laſtly, thoſe who led aſtray by a prejudice for a particular ſyſtem, had followed their own ideas only; all theſe authors, I ſay, deluded by the abſence or preſence of genius, had diſappeared, or had undergone the pruning knife of a judicious critic, which is far from being

wore a blue ribband, but doubtleſs that he was a ſprightly philoſopher.

* When Hercules ſaw the ſtatue of his favourite Adonis, in the temple of Venus, he cried out, "There is no divinity in thee." The ſame may be ſaid of all thoſe poliſhed, delicate, ingenious, and effeminate works.

being a fatal inſtrument*. Sagacity and a love of order had preſided over this new ſtructure; as in thoſe thick foreſts where the branches, intwined with each other, conceal all the paths, and where there reigns an eternal and noxious ſhade; if the induſtry of man bears the hatchet and the flame, the genial rays of the ſun enter, the flowery paths recreate the ſight, and we traverſe each route without fear or diſguſt. I perceived in a corner a curious book which ſeemed to me judiciouſly compoſed, and was intitled, *Uſurped Reputations.* It contained the reaſons that determined the extinction of many books, and of the contempt that was caſt on the pen of certain writers, who were nevertheleſs admired in their own age. The ſame book redreſſed the wrongs of the cotemporaries of great men, when their adverſaries were unjuſt, jealous, or blinded by ſome other paſſion†. I chanced to lay my hand on a Voltaire. O heavens! I cried, to what a ſize is he ſhrunk! Where are thoſe twenty-ſix quarto volumes that flowed from his brilliant, exhauſtleſs pen? If that celebrated writer

* It would be a work worthy of a man of ſound judgment, to form a rational and comprehenſive catalogue of the beſt books in every ſcience, and to point out the manner of reading them, and thoſe paſſages that are moſt worthy of attention.

† There ſtill remains a good book to be wrote, though already done; *Great Events from little Cauſes.* But, where is the man who can diſcover the real clue; I will mention another, very proper for the preſent age, *The Placemen who become Perſecutors to ſerve the Baſeneſs of thoſe they deſpiſe*; and one more, *The Crimes of Sovereigns.*

ter could come again upon the earth, how would he be aſtoniſhed!—"We have been obliged to burn a large portion," was replied. "You know that fine genius paid a tribute ſomewhat too large to human frailty. He precipitated his ideas, he gave them not time to ripen. He preferred whatever had the character of boldneſs, to a flow diſcuſſion of the truth. Rarely had his writings any depth. He was a rapid ſwallow that glanced with grace and eaſe along the ſurface of a large river, where he drank, and dipped his wings as he ſkimmed along. He was at once a man of genius and of wit. We cannot refuſe him the firſt, the moſt noble and amiable of virtues, the love of humanity. He has combated with ardour for the intereſt of man. He not only detected, but rendered deteſtable, perſecution and tyranny of every kind. He brought a rational and affecting morality on the ſtage. He has painted heroiſm in its proper colours. In a word, he was the greateſt poet of the French nation. We have preſerved his Epopeæ; for, though the plan be trifling, yet the name of Henry IV. has rendered it immortal. We are, above all, captivated with his beautiful tragedies, in which there ſhines a pencil ſo facile, ſo various and ſo juſt. We have alſo preſerved all his proſe pieces, where he is not ridiculous, too ſevere, or improperly ſatyrical; it is there he is truly original*. But you know, that toward the fifteen laſt

* I am charmed with the painter of nature, who lets his pencil run freely over the cloth, who prefers a certain eaſy and bold liberty, that gives a luſtre to his colours; to that frigid preciſion, that tame regularity, which conſtantly reminds

laſt years of his life, he had only a few remaining ideas which he repreſented under a hundred different faces. He perpetually retailed the ſame ſubject. He engaged in controverſies with thoſe he ought to have deſpiſed. He had the misfortune to write inſipid and groſs reflections againſt J. J. Rouſſeau; a furious jealouſy ſo far tranſported him, that he even wrote without judgment. We were obliged to burn thoſe wretched performances, which would have diſhoured him to the moſt diſtant poſterity; ſtill more jealous of his glory than he was himſelf, we have been obliged to deſtroy one moiety of that great man to preſerve the other."

I am

minds me of the art and its ſubterfuges. O, how brilliant is the writer who gives himſelf up entirely to his genius, who indulges in voluntary negligences, and ſhews, with a light hand, happy and variegated touches; who deigns to have foibles, is pleaſed with a certain irregularity, and never ſo engaging as when in diſorder! Behold the man of ſuperlative genius. A tedious ſymmetry can pleaſe none but ſots. Every man of a lively imagination wiſhes that we would aid him with our wings. It is to this happy vivacity, which rouſes the minds, that we owe the crowd of readers. Like the elementary fire, the writer ſhould be for ever in action. But this ſecret is communicated only to the few. The numbers labour, ſweat, make a thouſand efforts to obtain a jelid perfection. He who is born to write in a bold, rapid, brilliant ſtyle, above all rules, with the ſame ſtroke of his pen expreſſes his idea and imprints it with pleaſure on the heart of his reader. Behold Voltaire, who, like a ſtag, bounds over the plains of literature, while ſome pretended imitator, ſome congealed copyiſts, ſuch as La H***, comes, like a tortoiſe, creeping after.

I am charmed, I cried, to find, that you have preſerved J. J. Rouſſeau entire. What a work is the Emilius*! What a ſenſibility of ſoul is diffuſed over that beautiful romance, the new Eloiſa! What bold, comprehenſive, and penetrative ideas in his letters to De la Montagne! What vigor, what fire in his other works! With what thought does he inſpire his reader! Every particular appears to me worthy to be read.—"So we have judged," replied the librarian. "There muſt have been a very mean and cruel pride in your age. In fact, you muſt not have underſtood him; your trifling diſpoſition would not permit you to purſue his arguments. He had reaſon to deſpiſe you. Your philoſophers themſelves were of the vulgar people. But I think we are agreed concerning this philoſopher; it is therefore needleſs to ſay more."

In turning over the books of the laſt diviſion, I ſaw with pleaſure many works formerly dear to my nation. L'Eſprit des Loix, L'Hiſtoire Naturelle; the book De l'Eſprit commented in rime; arts†. Nor had they excluded the friend of man, the Beliſarius; the works of Linguet; the eloquent harangues of Thomas

* What inſipidities have been printed againſt this immortal work! How can a man dare to write when he knows not even how to read.

† The ſpider draws poiſon from the ſame roſe whence the bee extracts honey; ſo a bad man frequently nourishes his malignity from the ſame book whence the good man derives the greateſt conſolation.

Thomas*, St. Servan, Dupaty, Le Tourneur, and the discourier of Phocion. I distinguished the numerous and philosophic works that the age of Louis XV. had produced†. The Encyclopedia was formed on a new and more happy plan. Instead of that wretched practice of reducing all things to a dictionary, that is, of mincing the several sciences, they had preserved each art entire. With a single glance of the eye you saw all their different parts. This work contained vast and exact drafts that followed each other in a regular order, and were connected in a simple and pleasing manner. All that had been wrote against the Christian religion was burned, as books that were become absolutely useless.

I inquired for the historians, and the librarian said, "We assign that province in part to our painters. Facts have a philosophical certainty, which is to be expressed by the pencil. What is history? In reality nothing more than the knowledge of facts. The reflections and inferences appertain to the historian, and not to the science itself. The facts, however, are innumerable. What popular reports; what superannuated fables; what endless details! The transactions

* There is at present no tribune for harangues; eloquence however is not dead. It still speaks, sometimes thunders; and though it cannot rouse us to virtuous sentiments, yet, at least, it confounds us with shame.

† The philosopher who is employed in examining the nature of man, of policy and manners, diffuses useful lights over the community; his detractors are either fots, or malignant citizens.

PAGINATION INCORRECT

tions of each age are the most interesting of all others for the cotemporaries; and of all ages, those of the present only are not to be investigated. They have wrote laboriously of ancient and foreign history, but have turned their attention from present facts*. The spirit of conjecture is displayed at the expence of accuracy. Many have so little known their own weakness, that several single pens have attempted an universal history, more romantic than the good Indians, who allowed at least four elephants to support the world. In a word, history has been so disfigured, so stuffed with falsehoods and puerile reflections, that a romance to every judicious mind, is more eligible than those collections of facts, where, as on a boundless ocean, we sail without a compass†.

"We have made a slight extract, painting each age in strong characters, and describing those persons

* This is natural enough in France, where there is so much danger in writing on recent facts; but, to our good fortune, it it not so here.

† When we reflect on the nature of the human mind, we must be convinced of the impossibility of a real ancient history. The modern is more probable; but between probability and truth there is almost as great a distance, as between truth and falsehood. Moreover, we learn nothing from modern histories. Each historian accomodates the facts to his ideas, almost in the same manner as a cook does the dishes to his palate; we must dine in the taste of the cook: we must read in the humour of the historian.

fons only who have had a real influence on the deſtiny of empires*. We have omitted thoſe reigns where there were nothing to be ſeen but wars and cruelties. They ought to be concealed; for nothing ſhould be preſented that will not do honour to humanity. It is perhaps dangerous to preſerve all the exceſſes to which vice has been extended. The number of the guilty ſeems to palliate the crime; and the fewer outrages we ſee, the leſs we are tempted to commit them. We have treated human nature like that ſon who revered his father, and covered with a vail the diſorders of ebriety."

I approached the librarian, and aſked in a low voice, for the age of Louis XV. which might ſerve as a continuation to that of Louis XIV. by Voltaire. I found that it had been compoſed in the twentieth century. Never have I read any thing more curious, more ſingular and aſtoniſhing. The hiſtorian, from a regard to the extravagance of the circumſtances, had not ſacrificed any detail. My curioſity, my aſtoniſhment redoubled at every page. I was taught to reform many of my ideas; and to know, that the age in which we live, is, of all others, the moſt diſtant from

* To ſay the reign of Charles VI. or Louis XIII. is a miſnomer, and muſt mislead the inattentive reader. A monarch, who has no influence on the age in which he lives, as is frequently the caſe, ſhould be ranked in the claſs of common men, and we ſhould ſay, for example, after the death of Henry IV. *We ſhall now deſcribe the age of Richelieu, &c.*

from us. I laughed, I admired greatly; but I wept at leaſt as much. . . . . I can ſay no more here; the events of the preſent day are like fruit that ſhould not be taſted till it is ripe*.

CHAP. XXIX.

THE MEN OF LETTERS.

AS I went out of the library, a ſtranger accoſted me, and we entered into converſation. It was concerning men of letters. I have known but few in my time, I ſaid, but thoſe I have known were gentle, modeſt, friendly, and full of probity. If they had defects, they redeemed them by ſo many valuable properties, that a man muſt be incapable of friendſhip who had not an attachment to them. Envy, ignorance, and calumny have diſfigured the characters of authors; for every public man is expoſed to the brutal diſcourſe of the vulgar, who, however ignorant they may be, pronounce boldly†. The great, as deſtitute, for the moſt part

* Time produces all things. Thoſe ſecrets which are thought to be completely concealed will offer themſelves to the public, as the rivers run into the ſea. To our children all will be known.

† A man of this claſs, who is incapable of writing a ſingle line, but has a talent for verbal ſatire, in conſequence of

part, of talents as of virtue, are jealous of their attracting the regard of the nation, and pretend to despise them*. Writers have also frequently to combat with the contemptible taste of the public, who, the more it is enriched by their works, becomes the more sparing of its applause, and sometimes abandoning works

of ridiculing authors and gratifying malignity, becomes at last persuaded, that he is himself a man of taste and ingenuity; but he is miserably deceived, both in judging of himself and of others.

* It is not to the most powerful monarchs, nor to the most opulent princes, nor to the chief rulers of a nation, that most states owe their splendor, force and glory. It is private persons, who have made the most astonishing improvements in the arts, in sciences, and even in the art of government. Who measured the earth? Who discovered the system of the heavens? Who invented those curious manufactures with which we are cloathed? Who has laid open the secrets of natural history? Who has explored the intricacies of chemistry, anatomy, and botany? Certainly private persons; who, in the eye of the wise man, must eclipse the pretenders to greatness, those proud dwarfs, who cherish nothing but their own vanity. In effect, it is not kings, ministers, persons invested with authority that govern the world. No, it is those men of superior genius, who cry to their cotemporaries, with their bold and irresistible voice, *Banish those wretched prejudices; pursue more elevated thoughts, despise what thou hast foolishly respected, and respect that which, through ignorance, thou hast despised; profit by thy past follies, and learn better to distinguish the rights of mankind; adopt the ideas that I have set before thee. Thy route is clearly traced, march! And I will answer for thy success.*

works of genius, run gaping after ſome wretched buffoonery. In a word, they have need of the greateſt fortitude to ſupport themſelves in a career, where the pride of mankind offers them a thouſand indignities. They have, however, braved both the inſolence and diſdain of the great, and the ignorant attacks of the vulgar. A juſt renown, by blaſting their enemies, has crowned their noble efforts with ſucceſs.

"I acknowledge this portrait to be juſt," my interlocutor politely replied. "Men of letters are become the moſt reſpectable of citizens. Every one feels how deſirable it is to be diſſolved in tenderneſs; it is the moſt lively pleaſure the mind can enjoy. It is to them, therefore, that the ſtate has confided the care of developing this principle of virtue. By exhibiting majeſtic, terrible, and tender pictures, and by improving the ſenſibility of mankind, they diſpoſe them to all thoſe great qualities that proceed from it. "We find," he continued, "that the writers of your age, as to what concerns morality, and grand and uſeful purſuits, have far ſurpaſſed thoſe of the age of Lewis XIV. They have freely painted the faults of kings, the misfortunes of the people, the ravages of the paſſions, the efforts of virtue, and even the ſucceſs of vice; faithful to their vocation*, they have had the intrepidity to inſult thoſe

* The famous Locuſta, ſkilful in the art of preparing ſubtle poiſons, was lodged by Nero in his palace; and ſo deſirous

thoſe bloody trophies which ſervility and error had conſecrated to tyranny. Never was the cauſe of humanity more ſtrongly pleaded; and though they have loſt it by an inconceivable fatality, yet theſe dauntleſs advocates remain not the leſs covered with glory.

"All the ſtreams of light that have iſſued from theſe vigorous and undaunted ſouls, are preſerved and tranſmitted from age to age*: like a ſeed that is for a long time trod under foot, but being ſuddenly tranſported by a favourable wind to ſome place of ſhelter,

deſirous was he of preſerving a woman ſo uſeful to his deſigns, that he appointed guards to attend her. It was ſhe who compoſed the cup by which Britannicus periſhed. When the poiſon had blackened the viſage of that unfortunate prince, Nero cauſed it to be ſpread over with white paint, ſo that it appeared with the paleneſs of a natural death; but, as they bore it to the tomb, a ſudden and copious ſhower of rain waſhed off the paint, and expoſed what the tyrant thought he had ſafely concealed. I find in this fact an allegory ſufficiently juſt. Princes fondly careſs faithful monſters; and either from ſtupidity, or contempt of the laws, or a confidence in their own power, they think to conceal their real qualities from the public; but ſoon hiſtory, the ſudden ſhower, waſhes off the falſe colours, and all their vices ſtand full expoſed to view.

* Men of common capacities, and they who have not fathomed the depths of government beyond a certain point, are very far from being able to diſcover the connections of ſpeculation and ſcience with the riches and happineſs of a nation.

shelter, it springs up, increases, becomes a tree, whose spreading branches present both ornament and refuge.

"If, better informed of the nature of true greatness, we despise the pomp and ostentation of power; if we turn our eyes towards those objects that are worthy the research of men; we shall find that it is to letters we owe it*. Our writers have still surpassed yours in courage; if a prince deviates from the laws, they revive the renowned tribunal of the Chinese; they engrave his name on a dreadful plate of brass, by which his disgrace is eternally recorded. History in their hands is the rock to false glory, the sentence passed on illustrious criminals, the crucible from which the hero exhales, if he has not been a man.

"How ought the princes of the earth, who complain that all who approach them are affected by constraint

* We may assert, with a degree of certainty, that the new lights, which are every day discovered, descending by degrees in almost every state, will, by a sure method annihilate the present capricious jumble of laws, and substitute others more natural and more just; the judgment of the public will have a powerful and penetrating voice that will change the face of nations; it will be printing that will render this great service to humanity. Let us therefore continue to print; and let every one from the highest to the lowest, read; but, at the same time, let us print that only which is true and useful; and let us well meditate before we write.

ſtraint and diſſimulation, to be confounded! Have they not always with them thoſe dumb but independent and intrepid orators, who can, without offence, inſtruct them, and who from their thrones, have neither favours to expect nor diſgrace to fear*? We ought to render that juſtice to thoſe noble writers, to acknowledge that there is no race of men who have better fulfilled their deſtination. Some have overthrown ſuperſtition, others ſupported the rights of the people. Theſe have dug the fruitful mine of morality, thoſe diſplayed virtue under the figure of an indulgent ſenſibility†. We have forgot the foibles which they might have as private perſons; we ſee that maſs of light only which they have formed and aggran-

* The Prometheus of Eſchylus contains a beautiful and clear allegory. It is that of an arbitrary monarch cruſhing a man of genius; for having brought down fire from heaven, with which he enlightened mankind, he is fixed to the ſummit of a rock; being ſlowly ſcorched by the ſun's rays, the colour of his body is changed; the nymphs of the woods and fields ſurround him with lamentations but are unable to aſſiſt him; the Furies load him with irons that eat into his fleſh; but a remorſe for having been virtuous can never enter his heart.

† How great the recompence to an author who is the friend of truth and virtue, when, as we read, we drop the burning tear upon his book, and, at the ſame moment draw from the bottom of the heart the ſtruggling ſigh; then cloſe the book, and, lifting our eyes to heaven, form ardent virtuous reſolutions! This, doubtleſs, is the moſt brilliant reward that any writer ought to wiſh. What, to this, are the diſcordant ſhouts of applauſe, as empty as they are tranſitory, as envied as they are uncertain.

aggrandiſed, that moral ſun, which can never be extinguiſhed but with the grand luminary of the univerſe."

How glad ſhould I be to enjoy the preſence of thoſe great men! for I have ever had a ſtrong attraction towards writers of real merit; I love to ſee them, but ſtill more to hear their diſcourſe.—"It happens right luckily; to-day they open the academy, in order to receive a man of letters."—In the room, doubtleſs, of one that deceaſed.—"What ſay you? Muſt merit wait till death has deſtroyed his fellow, that he may ſupply his place? No; the number of our academicians is not fixed; every talent receives the crown of its reward; there are ſufficient to recompenſe them all*."

CHAP.

* An author who is not much influenced by perſonal motives, will not give himſelf great concern to think that he is a writer of merit in an ignorant age; if he be more deſirous of the progreſs of human knowledge, than of gratifying his own vanity, inſtead of being afflicted, he will rejoice that he cannot launch forth from his obſcurity.

CHAP. XXX.

THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCE.

WE advanced toward the academy. It ſtill preſerved that name; but how different its ſituation from that where it was formerly held! It no longer made a part of the palace of the king. How wonderful are the revolutions of ages! A pope now ſits in the place of the Cæſars! ignorance and ſuperſtition inhabit Athens! the fine arts have flown to Ruſſia! Would it have been believed in my time, that a mountain marked with ridicule for merely affording nurture to a few aſſes by its thiſtles, ſhould become the juſt image of the ancient Parnaſſus, the ſeat of genius, the habitation of renowned writers? They would have aboliſhed the name of Montmartre*, but from a complaiſance to received prejudices.

This auguſt ſpot, clothed on all ſides by venerable woods, is conſecrated to ſolitude; an expreſs law forbids the approach of all diſcordant noiſe. The earth has produced freſh beds of ſtone to form the foundations of this noble aſylum. On this mount, bleſſed with the moſt genial rays of the ſun, are nouriſhed fair trees, whoſe towering ſummits ſometimes embrace

* The hill Montmartre is on the north ſide of Paris, and almoſt adjoining to it. They ſay, that on its ſummit there was once a temple dedicated to Mars, from which it took its name.

brace each other, and sometimes at distance keep, to afford the exploring eye a prospect of the face of heaven.

As I mounted with my guide, I observed, here and there, elegant hermitages distinct from each other. I asked who inhabited those flowery spots, half concealed by the woods, and half exposed to view, whose aspect appeared so engaging.—"You shall soon know," was replied; "let us now hasten; the hour approaches." In fact, I saw a great number of persons arrive from every side, not in coaches, but on foot. Their conversation seemed to be highly pleasing and animated. We entered an edifice sufficiently large, but decorated with great simplicity. I observed no Swiss, armed with a heavy halberd, at the door of the tranquil sanctuary of the Muses; there was nothing to forbid entrance amidst a crowd of worthy men*.

The hall was remarkably sonorous; so that the most feeble academic voice might be heard at the greatest distance. The order that there reigned was not less remarkable; several rows of benches surrounded the hall; for they knew that the ear should be at its ease in an academy, as the eye in the saloon of a painter

* I have ever been highly curious to see a man of genius, and have thought that I discovered in his port, his actions, the air of his head, his countenance, and aspect, something that distinguished him from the common race of men. The science of physiognomy still remains to be properly investigated.

a painter. I considered every object at my leisure. The number of academies seats was not ridiculously fixed; but what seemed most singular was, that, on the back of each chair a scroll was displayed, on which were distinctly wrote the titles of that academician who chose it for his seat; every one might place himself in an armed chair without any other previous ceremony than that of displaying the scroll that contained the title of his works. It is easy to conceive, that no one offered to display a charte blanche, as was done in my day, by bishops, marshals, and preceptors*; still less would they dare to expose to the severe public eye the title of a work of mean merit, or a servile imitation; it must be a work that points out some new discovery in the arts, or, at least, that excels all others on the same subject†.

My

* We have seen on the Boulevards, *(the old ramparts of Paris which now serve for recreation,)* an automaton that articulated sounds, and the people flock to admire it. How many automata, with human faces, do we see at court, at the bar, in the academies, who owe their speech to the breath of invisible agents; when they cease, the machines remain dumb.

† There are no longer any means left to distinguish ourselves, they say. Wretches! that hunt after smoke, the path of virtue still lies before you; there you will find but few competitors; but that is not the sort of glory that you seek. I understand you; you would become the subject of popular discourse. I sigh for you, and for the human race.

My guide pulled me by the ſleeve—"You ſeem aſtoniſhed; let me increaſe your wonder. Thoſe charming habitations which you obſerved on aſcending the mountain, form the retreats of thoſe who are ſtruck by an unknown power that commands them to write. Our academicians are Carthuſians*; it is in ſolitude that genius diſplays its powers, forſakes the beaten path, and diſcovers unknown regions. When does enthuſiaſm ſpring forth? When the author deſcends into himſelf, when he inveſtigates his own ſoul, that profound mind, of whoſe value the poſſeſſor is not unfrequently ignorant. What inſpirers are retreat and friendſhip†! What more is neceſſary to thoſe who ſearch for nature and truth? Where do we hear their ſublime voice? In the tumult of cities, amidſt that crowd of low purſuits, that, unknown to ourſelves, beſiege the heart? No; it is amidſt the rural ſcenes that the ſoul rejuvenates; it is there that it contemplates the majeſty of the univerſe, that majeſty, eloquent, and all-gracious; the thought ſtrikes, the expreſſion glows; the image and its ſplendor become widely extended, like the horizon that ſurrounds us.

"In

* Let him who would acquire a ſtrength of mind, aſſiduouſly exert its powers; the greateſt ſluggard is ever the greateſt ſlave.

† Man has much longer time to live with the mind than with the ſenſes; he would therefore act wiſely to depend for his pleaſures on the former rather than on the latter.

"In your days, the men of letters frequented the circles to amuſe the coquettes, and obtain an equivocal ſmile; they ſacrificed all that was bold and manly to the ſuperſtitious empire of faſhion; they diveſted the ſoul of its real nature, to pleaſe the age. Inſtead of looking forward to an auguſt ſeries of ages, they rendered themſelves ſlaves to a momentary taſte. In a word, they purſued ingenious falſehoods; they ſtifled that inward voice which cries, *Be ſevere as the time that flies; be inexorable as poſterity.*

"Theſe academics, moreover, here enjoy that happy mediocrity*, which, amongſt us, conſtitutes ſovereign wealth. We do not offer to interrupt them, either with a deſire to diſcover the leaſt movements of their minds, or from a vanity of being admitted to their company. We revere their time, as we do the hallowed bread of the indigent; but attentive to their deſires, at the leaſt ſignal they find them gratified."—If that be the caſe, you muſt have ſufficient employment. Are there not thoſe who aſſume the rank to cover their idleneſs or real weakneſs?—"No; this region is ſo ſtrongly illuminated, that the leaſt ſpot is eaſily diſcovered. Impoſture dare not here intrude; it can never bear the look of a man of genius, whoſe piercing eye nought can deceive. For thoſe whom preſumption may bring hither,

* The great man is modeſt; the man of mediocrity diſplays his indifferent advantages; ſo the majeſtic river glides ſilently along, while the rivulet runs chattering over the rugged pebbles.

hither*, there are persons of a benign temper, who effectually dissuade them from a project that cannot redound to their honour. In a word, the law enjoins ...."—Our conversation was interrupted by a sudden general silence in the assembly. My whole soul flew to my ear, when I beheld one of the academicians prepare to read a manuscript which he held in his hand, and with a grace by no means insignificant.

O ungrateful memory, how could I reproach thee? Why didst thou desert me? Would that I could repeat the persuasive discourse pronounced by that academic! The force, the method, the flowing periods have escaped me; but the impression on my mind can never be effaced. No; never was I so enraptured. The visage of each auditor reflected those sentiments with which I was agitated; it was one of the most delicious enjoyments my heart ever felt. What depths! what images! what truths! what a noble flame! how sublime a tone! The orator declaimed against envy†, described the sources of that fatal

* There is no object that may not be viewed from a hundred different stations; but there is only one from whence it can be justly beheld; and if that is not chosen, genius and labour become useless.

† How I pity the envious and jealous mind, that glances over the valuable parts of a work, and knows not how to enjoy them. By analogy it dwells on those parts only that are imperfect. The man of letters who by an habitual exercise

fatal paſſion, its horrible effects, the infamy it has caſt on the laurels that have crowned many great men; all its vile, unjuſt, deteſtable qualities were ſo ſtrongly painted, that while we deplored the fate of its blind, unhappy victims, we trembled leſt our own hearts ſhould be infected by its poiſon. The mirror was ſo properly preſented before each particular character, their meanneſs expoſed in ſuch various and ridiculous lights, the human heart diſplayed in a manner ſo new, ſo refined, ſo ſtriking, that it was impoſſible not to know them; and when knowing, not to form the deſign of abjuring that miſerable weakneſs. The fear of bearing ſome reſemblance to that frightful monſter, Envy, produced a happy effect. I ſaw, O inſtructive ſight! O moment unheard of in the annals of literature! I ſaw the members of that aſſembly regard each other with a tender and ſympathizing look; I ſaw them mutually open their arms, embrace, and cry with joy; their boſoms reſting and panting againſt each other; I ſaw (will it be believed?) the authors diſperſed about the room imitate the affectionate tranſports of the academicians, and convinced of the talents of their brethren, ſwear an unalterable, eternal friendſhip; I ſaw the tears of affection and benevolence flow from every eye. They were a company of brothers, who ſubſtituted that

exerciſe of reaſon and taſte, improves the one and the other, and inceſſantly creates to himſelf new joys, is of all men the moſt happy—if he can diveſt himſelf of jealouſy or of an over ſenſibility.

that honourable applauſe in the room of our ſtupid clapping of hands*.

After the full enjoyment of thoſe delicious moments; after each one had expreſſed the various ſenſations that he had felt, and thoſe ſtrokes by which he was moſt ſtrongly affected; and after frequently repeating the vows of endleſs friendſhip, another member of this auguſt ſociety aroſe with a ſmiling air; an applauding murmur run through the hall, for he was eſteemed a Socratic railer†. He raiſed his voice, and ſaid,

'GENTLEMEN,

'Many reaſons have induced me to offer you to 'day a ſhort, but, I think, curious extract of what 'our academy was in its infancy, that is, about the 'eighteenth century. The cardinal who was our 'founder‡, and whom our predeceſſors have ſo ex-

'travagantly

* When at the theatre or the academy, an affecting or ſublime paſſage ſtrikes the aſſembly, inſtead of that ſigh from the bottom of the heart, and the ſilent emotions, I hear thoſe clappings redoubled till they ſhake the roof, I ſay to myſelf, theſe people have no feeling; they are men of wood that ſtrike two boards together.

† As a malignant raillery is the fruit of an iniquitous diſpoſition, ſo an ingenious pleaſantry is the fruit of wiſdom. A ſprightly temper and graceful manner were the moſt triumphant arms of Socrates.

‡ Cardinal Richelieu.

'travagantly extolled, and to whom they attributed, 'in our eſtabliſhment, the moſt profound deſigns, 'would never have formed this inſtitution, (let us 'confeſs it) if he had not himſelf made wretched 'verſes which he idolized, and which he was deſi- 'rous that we ſhould celebrate. That cardinal, I 'ſay, at the time he invited the authors to form one 'body, diſcovered his deſpotic temper, when he 'made them ſubject to rules ever unknown to genius. 'Our founder had ſo imperfect an idea of what ſuch 'a ſociety ought to be, that he limited the number 'of members to forty; ſo that Corneille and Mon- 'teſquieu might have waited at the door to the end 'of their days. This cardinal imagined, moreover, 'that genius would naturally remain in obſcurity, 'if titles and dignities did not rouſe it from its 'inanity. When he formed this ſtrange judgment, 'ſurely, he could think of ſuch rhimers only as Col- 'letet and his colleagues, whom he ſupported out of 'mere vanity.

'From thence it became an eſtabliſhed cuſtom, 'that they who had money in the room of merit, and 'titles inſtead of genius, ſeated themſelves by thoſe 'whoſe names had been celebrated by fame through- 'out all Europe. He was himſelf the firſt example, 'and he was but too well imitated. When thoſe 'great men who drew the attention of their own age, 'and whoſe regards were fixed on that of poſterity, 'had covered with glory the place where they held 'their aſſemblies, the gilt and titled idiots beſieged 'the door; nay, almoſt preſumed to declare, that

'they reflected honour on the ſociety by their paltry 'ribbons, and, in fact, believed, or pretended to be- 'lieve, that, by ſeating themſelves by men of genius, 'they actually reſembled them.

'Then were ſeen marſhals, as well victorious as 'beaten, mitred heads that had never made a man- 'date, men of the long robe, preceptors, and finan- 'ciers, who pretended to the title of men of genius; 'and though they were nothing more than the deco- 'rations of the theatre, really believed themſelves 'to be capital performers. Some eight or ten among 'the forty ſhone by their own luſtre; the reſt had 'only a borrowed light; yet it was neceſſary to 'wait for the death of an academician in order to 'fill his place, and which, nevertheleſs, for the moſt 'part, ſtill remained empty.

'What could be more ludicrous than to ſee that 'academy, whoſe renown was ſpread over all the 'capital, hold its aſſemblies in a ſmall, cloſe, mean 'room? There, in ſeveral armed chairs, that were 'formerly red, were ſeen, from time to time, a 'number of indolent wretches, careleſsly ſeated, 'weighing of ſyllables, or carefully culling the words 'out of ſome piece of proſe or poetry, in order, at 'laſt, to applaud the moſt unmeaning among them. 'But, on the other hand, pray remark it, gentlemen, 'they never erred in calculating the number of coun- 'ters that each gained by the abſence of his brethren. 'Can you believe that they gave the conqueror a 'gold medal in the room of a branch of oak, and

'that

'that on it there was engraved this ridiculous inſcrip-
'tion: *A l'imortalité?* Alas! that immortality paſſed
'the next day into the goldſmith's crucible; and
'that was the moſt real advantage the victorious
'champion obtained.

'Could you imagine, that thoſe little victories
'ſometimes turned the conquerors brains, ſo great
'was their ridiculous vanity*? and that the judges
'exerciſed ſcarce any other function than that of diſ-
'tributing thoſe uſeleſs prizes, about which no one
'even ever made inquiry?

'The place of their aſſembly was open to none
'but authors; and they were admitted by tickets
'only. In the morning was performed a muſical
'maſs; then a trembling prieſt pronounced the pa-
'negyric of Lewis IX. (I know not very well why)
'extolling him for more than an hour, though he
'was

* Except the univerſity prizes, which give riſe to a fooliſh pride in childiſh heads, I know of nothing more pernicious than the medals of our literary academies. The conqueror really thinks himſelf a perſon of conſequence, and is ruined for the remainder of his days; he diſdains every one who has not been crowned with ſo rare and illuſtrious a laurel. See in the Mercure de France, for the month of September, 1769, page 184, an inſtance of the moſt ridiculous egotiſm. A very diminutive author informs the public, that when he was at college, he performed his theme better than his colleagues; he glories in it, and imagines that he maintains the ſame rank in the republic of letters.—*Riſum teneatis, amici?*

'was certainly a bad sovereign*. Then the orator 'declaimed on the croisades, which highly inflamed 'the archbishop's bile, who interdicted the priestly 'orator, for his temerity in displaying good sense. 'In the evening was another eulogy; but as that 'was on a profane subject the archbishop happily did not concern himself with the doctrine it 'contained.

'It is proper to remark, that the place where 'they displayed their wit was guarded by fusileers 'and gigantic Swiss, who understood no French. 'Nothing was more comic than the contrast between 'the meagre figure of the man of letters, and the 'enormous blustering stature of the Swiss. This 'was called *a public assembly*. The public, it is true, 'were there; but it was at the door; a poor acknowledgment for their complaisance. In the mean 'time, the sole liberty that remained to the nation 'was to pronounce absolutely on prose or verse, to 'condemn one author, applaud another, and sometimes laugh at them all.

'The academic rage, however, possessed every 'brain; every one would be a royal censor†, and 'then

*The first penal edict against particular sentiments or opinions was denounced by Lewis IX. vulgarly called St. Lewis.

† Royal censor! I never hear that word without laughter. We Frenchmen know not how ridiculous we are, nor what right we give posterity to regard us with pity.

'then an academician. They calculated the lives of 'all the members of the academy remarked the de- 'gree of vigour that their ſtomachs diſcovered at 'table; death ſeemed to the candidates to be ſlow in 'his approach; the cry was, They are immortal! 'When a new member was choſen, ſome one mut- 'tered ſoftly, Ah! when ſhall I make thy eulogy at 'the bottom of the long table, ſtanding with my hat 'on, and declare thee to be a great man as well as 'Lewis XIV. and the chancellor Seguier, while you 'ſleep profoundly under your tomb-ſtone decorated 'with a curious epitaph.

'The men of money at laſt ſo far prevailed in a 'golden age, that they completely baniſhed the men 'of letters; ſo that in the following generation, meſ- 'ſieurs the farmers-general, were in poſſeſſion of the 'forty armed chairs, where they ſnored as much at 'their eaſe as their predeceſſors; and were ſtill more 'dextrous in dividing the counters. From thence 'it was that the old proverb aroſe, *There is no enter- 'ing the academy without an equipage.*

'The men of letters, unable to regain their uſurped 'dominion, and drove to deſpair conſpired in form. 'They had recourſe to their uſual weapons, epi- 'grams, ſongs, and vaudevilles*; they exhauſted all 'the arrows from the quiver of ſatire; but, alas! all 'their attacks were fruitleſs; the hearts of their ad- 'verſaries

* Poor arms! which even are now prohibited, and which the inſolent pride of the great at once ſeeks after and dreads.

'verſaries were become ſo callous as to be no longer 'penetrable, even by the piercing ſtrokes of ridicule; 'all the bon mots of meſſieurs the authors would 'have been thrown away but for the aid of a violent 'indigeſtion, that ſurpriſed the academicians on a 'certain day, when aſſembled at a ſplendid feaſt. 'Thoſe three divinities, Apollo, Pluto, and the god 'of the digeſtive faculty, quarrelled with each other; 'Indigeſtion attacking them under the double title 'of financiers and academics, deſtroyed them almoſt 'all; the men of letters again entered their ancient 'dominion, and the academy was ſaved...."

There was an univerſal burſt of laughter in the aſſembly. Some of them aſked me in a low voice, if the account was juſt. Yes, I replied, for the moſt part; but when we look down on paſt times from the ſummit of ſeven hundred years, it is doubtleſs eaſy to give a ridiculous turn to what then exiſted. For the reſt, the academy agreed, even in my time, that each member who compoſed it was of more worth than the inſtitution itſelf. Nothing can be added to that confeſſion. The misfortune is, that when men meet in aſſemblies, their heads contract, as Monteſquieu ſaid, who ought to know.

I paſſed into an apartment that contained the portraits of the academicians, as well ancient as modern; I took particular notice of thoſe that ſucceeded the academics now living; but, to avoid offence, I ſhall not name them.

Helas!

Helas! la verité ſi ſouvent eſt cruelle,
On l'aime, et les humains ſont malheureux par elle.

VOLT.

Alas! the truth we love, though oft we find
Her cruel, and a foe to human kind.

I cannot, however, refrain from relating a fact that will certainly give great pleaſure to every generous mind, that loves juſtice and deteſts tyranny; which is, that the portrait of the abbé St. Pierre was reinſtated in its rank with all the honours due to ſuch exemplary virtue. They had effaced the turpitude of which the academy had rendered itſelf culpable, while it bowed the neck to a yoke of a ſervitude it ought never to have known. They had placed this ineſtimable and virtuous writer between Fenelon and Monteſquieu. I gave the praiſes due to this noble equity. I ſaw no portrait of Richelieu, nor of Chriſtina, nor of ——, nor ——, nor ——, which, though but paintings, had been for ever diſcarded.

As I deſcended the mountain, I caſt my eyes many times on thoſe lovely groves where dwelt the men of brilliant genius, who, in ſilence, and in the contemplation of nature, laboured to form the hearts of their countrymen to virtue, to the love of the true and beautiful; when ſoftly I ſaid: Would that I could render myſelf worthy of this academy!

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI.

THE KING'S CABINET.

NOT far from this enchanting ſpot, I beheld a vaſt temple that ſtruck me with awe and admiration. On its frontiſpiece was wrote *An abridgement of the univerſe.* "You ſee," ſaid my guide, "the king's cabinet, though the edifice belongs not to him, but to the ſtate. We give it that title merely as a mark of the reſpect we bear his perſon. Our ſovereign, moreover, after the manner of the ancient kings, exerciſes medicine, ſurgery, and the arts. The happy time is returned when men in power, who are provided with the neceſſary means for performing experiments, are charmed with the glory of making diſcoveries of importance to mankind, and are anxious to carry the ſciences to that degree of perfection which attends their influence and their zeal. The moſt conſiderable perſons in the nation employ their opulence in diſcovering the ſecrets of nature; and gold, formerly the ſource of vice and the wages of ſloth, rewards thoſe labours that are ſubſervient to humanity.

On entering, I was ſtruck with a pleaſing ſurprize. This temple was the animated palace of nature; all her productions were here collected with a profuſion that was completely regular. The temple conſiſted of four wings of an immenſe extent, in the centre of which

which was the moſt capacious dome my eyes ever beheld.

In different parts were placed marble ſtatues, with theſe inſcriptions: To the inventor of the ſaw, To the inventor of the plane, the ſcrew, the pulley, the capſtane, the crane, &c. &c. All the different ſorts of animals, vegetables, and minerals were placed under the four wings, and were viſible by one glance of the eye. What an immenſe and aſtoniſhing aſſemblage!

Under the firſt wing were ſeen all from the cedar to the hyſſop.

Under the ſecond from the eagle to the fly.

Under the third, from the elephant to the ant.

Under the fourth, from the whale to the gudgeon.

In the middle of the dome were the ſports of nature. Monſters of every kind. Productions enormous, unknown, ſingular in their gender. For Nature, the moment ſhe abandons her ordinary laws, diſcovers an intelligence ſtill more profound than when ſhe adheres ſtrictly to them. On the ſides were ſeen complete portions of matter taken from the mines which preſented the ſecret laboratories, where nature prepares thoſe metals that man has rendered ſometimes uſeful, ſometimes dangerous. Long beds of matter ſkilfully taken up, and artfully placed, ſhowed the interior face of the earth, and the order

obſerved

observed in the different strata of stone, clays, and loam, there deposited *.

How

* What follows was wrote me by a friend. "I have "now a greater taste than ever for the quarries. I think "it will make me dwell among the minerals and petrifac- "tions, and, perhaps, prepare me a tomb in the bowels of "the earth. I have descended near nine hundred feet into "her bosom, hard by ****, much concerned that I could "go no farther, I would have printed my footsteps on her "kernel, and have there enquired concerning the different "nations that had sojourned on her surface; would have "asked, if among the infinite number of her children, any "one had ever acknowledged, her benefactions? If at the "spot where I meditate, far from the light of day, she had "ever produced nourishing fruits? And if a people, or "a throne had been there; and how many beds, formed "of the ruins of mankind, she concealed from the depth of "this abyss to the last point of her diameter? I would have "entreated her to let me read all the catastrophies that she "had suffered; and I should have bathed them with my "tears, when I had learnt all the disasters from which she "had not been able to defend her numerous family; dis- "asters engraved on incontestible medals, but whose re- "membrance is utterly effaced; disasters that will again "return when she shall bury in her sides the present gene- "ration, who shall in their turn be trod under foot by gene- "rations without number, who perhaps will have no other "resemblance to them than the participation of the same "misfortunes. Then, in the midst of my grief, as just as "humane, I should have formed cruel and charitable "vows; I should have wished that she would have swal- "lowed up every animal existence; that she would have "snatched every being endowed with sensibility, from the "light of the sun; all of whose favours are insufficient to "repair

How great was my aſtoniſhment, when, inſtead of a parcel of dry bones, I ſaw the complete whale, the monſtrous hippopotamus, the terrible crocodile, &c. They

" repair the oppreſſion of tyrants, who divide and conſume " her amongſt them.

" This globe, which bears ſo many wretches, would " then roll in an univerſal and happy ſilence; it would pre- " ſent to the ſun's rays no unfortunate being compelled " to curſe it. No cry of lamentation would ariſe from this " planet; it would then traverſe the heavens with a tranquil " majeſty. Her children, ſleeping in one common tomb, " would ſuffer her to obey the laws of the creation, while " they were no longer the victims of deſtructive laws, that " fall on the head of man as on the meaneſt grain of ſand; " and death ſurrounding this double hemiſphere with his " peaceful ſhadow, would perhaps preſent an appearance " more ſtriking than the bluſtering reign of this vain glo- " rious life, that draws after it a long ſeries of crimes, an " inundation of misfortunes, and a terror even of its very " diſſolution."

I replied to this friend, that I did not join with him in the laſt wiſh; that phyſical evils were of all others the moſt ſup- portable; that they were tranſient, and beſides, inevitable; and we had nothing to do but ſubmit; but that it was in a man's own power to defend himſelf from thoſe unhappy paſſions, that torment and diſgrace him. I anſwered him in conformity to the principles that are ſufficiently explained in the courſe of this work. I thought it but juſt, however, to preſerve this extract, as it abounds with a ſtrong ſenſibility ¶.

¶ That there is a conſiderable degree of ſenſibility, and ſome ingenuity in this extract, cannot be denied; but at the ſame

They had followed the arrangement, the degradations and varieties that nature has obſerved in her productions. The eye thus traced without labour the chain of beings, from the greateſt to the leaſt. We there ſaw the lion, the tyger, the panther, in the fierce attitudes by which they are characteriſed; the voracious animals were repreſented as darting on their prey; even the energy of their motion ſeemed in a manner to be preſerved, as well as the creative breath by which they were animated. The more gentle, or more ſubtle, had loſt nothing of their phyſiognomy. Labour, cunning, and patience, art had cloſely imitated. The natural hiſtory of each animal was engraved under it, and the attendants explained verbally, what would have been too long to be read.

That ſcale of beings, ſo conteſted in our day, and which many philoſophers had judiciouſly ſuppoſed, was here confirmed by the cleareſt evidence. We ſaw diſtinctly that the ſeveral ſpecies touch; that they run, ſo to ſpeak, into each other; that by the delicate and ſenſible connections between the mere ſtone and the plant, the plant and the animal, the animal and man, there remained no interſtices. That their growth, duration, and deſtruction, were determined by

time, it has certainly the air of a philoſophic rant. The writer ſeems to have not believed, or at leaſt not ſufficiently regarded, the doctrine of a future ſtate. Would it have been unworthy the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, to have created this earth for the exiſtence of one man only, if, after a ſhort duration here, he were to inherit a glorious immortality?

by the ſame cauſes. It was moreover remarked, that nature in all her operations, tended with energy to the formation of man; and that labouring patiently, and even at a diſtance, that important work, ſhe endeavoured, by various eſſays, to arrive at the gradual term of his perfection, which ſeemed to be the utmoſt effort of her power.

This cabinet was by no means a chaos, an undigeſted maſs, where the objects, either widely ſcattered, or heaped together, afforded no determinate idea. The gradations were ſkilfully diſpoſed and preſerved. But what moſt of all favoured the arrangement, was, that they had diſcovered a preparation, which preſerved the ſeveral ſubjects from thoſe inſects that ſpring from corruption.

I found myſelf oppreſſed by the weight of ſo many miracles. My eye embraced all the luxury of nature. How at that moment did I reverence its author! What homage did I render to his power, his wiſdom, and what is even ſtill more precious, his goodneſs! How important a being does man appear, when ranging amongſt theſe wonders, collected by his hands; and which ſeem created for him, as he alone has the power of diſcerning their various properties. That line ſo juſtly proportioned, thoſe connections, thoſe ſeeming vacuities, but conſtantly filled; that gradual order, that plan which admits of no intermediate; after ſurveying the heavens, what ſight is more magnificent on the earth, which itſelf, at the

ſame time, is but an atom*? By what wonderful perſeverance, I ſaid, have you been able to perform ſo great a work?

"It is the work of many kings," they replied; "All jealous of honouring the title of an intelligent being; a ſublime and generous paſſion, ſupported by a conſtant ardor, has inſpired them with the curioſity of plucking off the veil from the boſom of nature. Inſtead of counting battles gained, towns taken by aſſault, injuſtice, and bloody conqueſts; they ſay of our kings, he made ſuch a diſcovery in the ocean of beings; he accompliſhed ſuch a project for the good of

* It muſt be confeſſed, that the hiſtory of nature is nothing more than that of our own weakneſs. The little that we know diſcovers the extent of our ignorance. Phyſics are to us what an occult ſcience was to the ancients. We cannot conteſt ſome parts of it, but we can deny the whole. What axiom is there peculiar to it? The project of a natural hiſtory is highly commendable, but it is ſomewhat faſtuous. A man ſpends his whole life in diſcovering the leaſt property of a mineral, and dies before he has exhauſted the ſubject. The immenſity of objects, animals, trees, and plants, is ſufficient to awe the capacity of a ſingle man. But ought it to diſcourage him? No; it is here that audacity is virtue, obſtinacy wiſdom, and preſumption utility. We ſhould watch nature ſo cloſely, that ſhe may at laſt, by ſurpriſe, diſcover her ſecret; to find it out ſeems not impoſſible to the human mind, provided the chain of obſervations be not interrupted, and that each philoſopher be more anxious for the perfection of ſcience than for his own glory; a rare, but neceſſary ſacrifice, and one that points out the real friend to man.

of mankind. They no longer ſpend a hundred million of livres for the deſtruction of their brethren in one campaign; but employ it in augmenting their real riches; in the encouragement of genius and induſtry, and by encreaſing their force, complete the general happineſs."

There have been ſecrets diſcovered in all ages, by men in appearance the moſt ſtupid. Many of them have like lightning ſhone for a moment only. We are ſenſible, however, that nothing is loſt we wiſh to ſave. All is laid up in the boſom of nature; we need but ſearch; it is vaſt, it preſents a thouſand reſources. Nothing is annihilated in the order of beings. By perpetually agitating the maſs of ideas, the moſt unexpected rencounters ariſe*. Fully convinced of the poſſi-

* When we regard the point from which men have ſet out in their philoſophical inquiries, and that to which they are now arrived, it muſt be confeſſed, that, with all our machines, we do not ſufficiently extend the force of the human mind. Man, left to himſelf, ſeems more ſtrong, than with all thoſe foreign helps. The more we acquire, the more indolent we become, the infinite number of experiments has ſerved ſcarce any other purpoſe than to conſecrate error. Content with ſeeing, we have thought that we touched the extremity, and have diſdained to ſeek further. Our philoſophers glide over a thouſand important objects, of which they ought to give the ſolution. Experimental philoſophy has become an exhibition, a ſort of public legerdemain. If the experiment that has been promiſed is tardy or diſobedient, the operator frequently corrects it with a touch of his finger. What do we now ſee? Uncon-

poſſibility of the moſt aſtoniſhing diſcoveries, we have not lingered in the purſuit.

We leave nothing to chance; that word, totally void of meaning is baniſhed from our language. Chance is a ſynonimous word with ignorance. Sagacity, labour, and patience, are the inſtruments by which nature is compelled to diſcover her moſt hidden treaſures. Men have learnt to derive every poſſible advantage from the gifts they have received. By perceiving the degree to which they could aſcend, they have been ſtimulated by glory to purſue the boundleſs career that is ſet before them. The life of a ſingle man, it is ſaid is too ſhort; it is true; and what have we done? we have united the force of each individual; they have acquired an immenſe empire; the one finiſhed what the other began. The chain was never interrupted, but each link cloſely connected with that which went before; thus it has been extended through ſeveral centuries, and this chain of ideas

nected, uſeleſs diſcoveries; dogmatical philoſophers, who ſacrifice all to their ſyſtems; retailers of words, who confound the vulgar, and excite pity on the man who can take the poliſhed covering from off their jargon. The memoirs of the academy of ſciences preſent a multitude of facts, of ſurpriſing obſervations; but all thoſe obſervations reſemble a relation of ſome unknown people, where one man only has been, and where no one can go again. We muſt believe the traveller and the philoſopher, even though they ſhould have deceived themſelves; nor can we draw any utility from their relations, on account of the diſtance of the country, and the difficulty of applying their obſervations to any real objects.

ideas and of ſucceſſive labour, may one day ſurround and embrace the univerſe. It is not merely a perſonal glory, but the intereſt of the human race, ſcarce thought of in your days, that ſupports the moſt difficult enterpriſes.

"We no longer amuſe ourſelves with vain ſyſtems*. Thanks to heaven (and to your folly they are all exhauſted. The torch of experience alone directs our ſteps. Our end is to know the ſecret cauſes of each appearance, and to extend the dominion of man, by providing him with the means of executing all thoſe labours that can aggrandiſe his exiſtence.

"We have certain hermits, (of one order only) who live in the foreſts; but it is to herbaliſe, which they do by choice, and from a natural propenſity. On certain ſtated days repair hither, to communicate their valuable diſcoveries.

"We have erected towers on the ſummits of ſeveral mountains, where they make obſervations that are continually increaſing, and that confirm each other. We have formed artificial torrents and cataracts, by which

* Let the fabricators of ſyſtems, phyſical and metaphyſical, explain to me the following incident. Father Mabillon was, in his younger days, an idiot. When he was ſix and twenty, he fell with his head againſt a ſtone ſtair-caſe. He was trepaned, and became a new man; endowed with a lively imagination, an amazing memory, and a zeal for ſtudy rarely equalled.

which is acquired a force ſufficient to produce the greateſt effects by motion*. We have eſtabliſhed aromatic baths, to rejuvenate the bodies of thoſe who are grown rigid by age; for God has not created ſo many ſalutary plants, and given the knowledge of their virtues to man, but to conſign to his vigilance the care of preſerving his health, and extending the fragile and precious thread of his days.

"Our public walks, which among you ſeemed calculated for pleaſure only, pay us an uſeful tribute. They are formed of fruit-trees, that delight the view, and embalm the air with their odours. They have taken place of the lime, the barren cheſnut, and the ſtunted elm. We engraft, and render prolific, wild trees, that our labours may correſpond with the bliſsful liberality of nature, who only waits for that maſter's hand, to whom the Creator, ſo to ſay, has ſubmitted them.

"We have menageries of large extent, for all ſorts of animals; and have found in the depths of the foreſts, ſeveral ſpecies that were altogether unknown to

* The moſt brilliant and expenſive undertakings are not the moſt to be admired, if they are erected merely for oſtentation. The machine that raiſes the water which ſupplies the gardens of Marley, is not, in the eyes of a wiſe man, of ſo much conſequence as a ſingle wheel, turned by a rivulet, that grinds the corn for ſeveral villages, or aids the labour of the manufacturer. Genius may be powerful, but it is only great when uſeful to mankind.

to you. We mix these tribes to see the effects they will produce. The discoveries we have here made are astonishing, and highly useful, for the species has sometimes encreased to twice the common size. To conclude, we have remarked, that our pains bestowed on nature, have rarely been ineffectual.

"We have also recovered many secrets that were lost to you, merely for want of perseverance in the search; for you were more solicitous to heap up a great number of words in the form of a book, than to recover, by dint of application, extraordinary inventions. We now possess, as did the ancients, malleable glass; the transparent stone; the Tyrian purple, with which the imperial robes were dyed; the mirror of Archimides*; the Ægyptian art of embalming; the machine by which they erected their obelisks; the cloth in which their bodies were consumed on the funeral pile; the art of liquifying stones; the inextinguishable lamps, and even the Appian sauce.

"Walk into these gardens, where botany has received all the perfection of which it was susceptible†. Your

* If the moderns have not precisely this mirror, they have something very like it.

† Thou, who wanderest over the fields, while thinking on the vessel that plows the waves, and bears thy treasure; stop, short-sighted wretch! Thou treadest upon an obscure, but salutary herb, that would communicate health and joy

to

Your blind philoſophers complained that the earth was replete with poiſons, we have diſcovered, that they are the moſt efficacious remedies that can be employed. Providence has here been juſtified, as it would be in every inſtance, but for the weakneſs of our knowledge. We now no longer hear complaints upon the earth; no mournful voice cries out, "All is evil!" We ſay, that in the ſight of God, "All is good!" Even the effects of theſe poiſons we not only foreſee, but know how to prevent.

"We have extracted from plants certain penetrating and benign juices, which, by inſinuating themſelves into the pores of the ſkin, mix with our fluids, eſtabliſh the temperament, and render the body more healthful, more ſupple and robuſt. We have diſcovered the ſecret of diſſolving the ſtone without burning the entrails. We now cure the phthiſis, and every other diſorder formerly deemed incurable*. But the moſt excellent of all our enterpriſes

to thy heart; a treaſure far more valuable than all thy ſhip contains. After having purſued a thouſand chimeras, end thy labours like J. J. Rouſſeau, by herbalizing.

* It is ſhameful for a man to declare that he has a ſecret uſeful to the human race, and reſerve it for the advantage of himſelf and his family. Alas! What recompence would he have? Wretch! Thou mayeſt paſs through the midſt of thy brethren, and ſay to thyſelf, "Theſe beings are indebted to me for a part of their health and felicity!" But thou art not poſſeſſed of that noble pride, nor affected by that

praises was, the exterminating that dreadful hydra, that cruel and shameful plague, which attacked the source of life and pleasure. The human race was on the brink of destruction when we discovered that happy specific, which has preserved its being and its pleasure, still more precious*. In the course of our walk, the Buffon of that age joined demonstration to words, by pointing out to me the objects of nature, and adding his own reflections."

But what most of all surprised me, was an optical cabinet, where they had assembled all the properties of light. It was a perpetual scene of magic. They caused to pass before my eyes landscapes, prospects, palaces, rainbows, meteors, luminous cyphers, imaginary seas; and which were more striking than even the realities; it was the region of enchantment. The prospect of creation rising out of inanity could not have given me a sensation more exquisite and astonishing.

They presented me with a microscope, by the aid of which, I perceived new beings that had escaped the piercing sight of our observers. So simple and wonderful was the art, that the eye was never fatigued.

that benevolent idea! Go, get gold, thou miscreant! and debar thy soul of that enjoyment. Thou executest justice, thou punishest thyself.

*I am concerned when I hear any one jest on this terrible scourge. We should never mention it without tears, and not in this instance, imitate the buffoon Voltaire.

fatigued. Every advance they made, fatisfied the moft ardent curiofity; the ftronger avidity it appeared to have, the more numerous were the objects that preſented themſelves. O! How great does man here appear? I more than once exclaimed, and how pitiful, comparatively, were they, whom, in my time, they called great*.

What related to acouſtics was not leſs miraculous. They had acquired the art of imitating all the articulations of the human voice, of the cries of animals, and the various notes of birds. By touching certain ſprings we ſeemed to be inſtantly tranſported to ſome wild foreſt; where we heard the roarings of the lion, the tyger and the bear, who ſeemed to be in conflict with each other. The noiſe rent the ear. You would have ſaid that the echo, ſtill more terrible, repeated at a diſtance thoſe horrid and barbarous cries. But ſoon the ſongs of nightingales ſucceeded to thoſe diſcordant ſounds. By their harmonious organs each

* A voluminous work might be compiled of the ſeveral queſtions, natural, moral, and metaphyſical, that preſent themſelves in crowds to the mind, and about which the man of genius knows no more than the fool; and we might reply in one word to all theſe metaphyſical, moral, and natural queſtions; but it ſhould be that of the profound logogriph or enigma, which ſurrounds us. I do not deſpair but that they will one day diſcover it. I expect every thing from the human mind, when it ſhall know its own faculties, and unite them; and when it ſhall regard its intelligence as a power that ought to penetrate all that is, and ſubject all that it contemplates.

each particle of the air became melodious; the ear diſcerned even the tremblings of their amorous wings, and thoſe tender and enchanting ſounds which the voice of man can never perfectly imitate. To the intoxication of pleaſure was joined the ſweet ſurpriſe, and the voluptuous ſenſation that aroſe from this happy union, ſeized every heart.

This people, who had conſtantly a moral aim even in the prodigies of art, had happily deduced an advantage from this ſurpriſing invention. When a young prince talked of combats, or diſcovered a warlike diſpoſition*, they conducted him to a room which they properly named, the Hell. The artiſt immediately put the ſprings in motion, and ſaluted his ear with all the horrors of a battle, the cries of rage and of grief; the lamentations of the dying; the ſounds of terror; the bellowing of that hideous thunder which is the ſignal of deſtruction and bears the execrable ſound of death. If nature did not then prevail on his mind, if he did not ſend forth a cry of horror, if his countenance remained unmoved and placid,

* Ye mighty potentates, who divide the globe among you, and are furniſhed with cannons, mortars, and numerous weapons, which are diſplayed by the dazzling ranks of thoſe armies you ſend to conquer a province or exterminate a kingdom, I know not how it is, but amidſt all your waving enſigns, you appear to me mean and wretched. The Romans, in their public games, diverted themſelves with the pigmies, whom they made to combat each other, but little thought that they were in the eye of a wiſe man, what the dwarfs appeared to them.

placid, he was confined to that room the remainder of his days. Every morning, however, they repeated a piece of this muſic, that he might be ſatisfied without the deſtruction of the human race.

The director of this cabinet, to my great ſurpriſe, exhibited all his infernal opera, without acquainting me of his intention. O heavens! mercy! mercy! I cried with all my ſtrength, ſtopping my ears. O ſpare me, ſpare me! He ſtopped the exhibition.—"How!" he ſaid, "does not this pleaſe you?"—None but a demon, I replied, can be pleaſed with ſuch an horrid uproar.—"This, however, was in your time a very common diverſion, which the kings and princes of Europe all enjoyed, as they did the chace*, which, as has been very juſtly remarked, is the true picture of war†. Your poets moreover extolled

* Among the many calamities that now oppreſs Europe, that which I find the moſt advantageous is the depopulation. Since men muſt be miſerable, there are the fewer to ſuffer. If this reflection be cruel, let it fall on them from whom it proceeds.

† How ſtrange and deplorable is the conſtitution of our political world! Eight or ten crowned heads hold the human race in chains; they correſpond, they afford each other mutual aid, they keep them in their royal hands to gripe them at their pleaſure, even till they produce convulſive motions. This conſpiracy is not covered with a veil, but is open, public, and conducted by ambaſſadors. Our complaints no longer reach their Lilly ears. Look around through Europe; it is no other than a vaſt arſenal, where-

tolled them for having frightened all the birds from the sky for ten leagues round, and for sagaciously providing provender for the ravens; but, above all things,

where thousands of barrels of powder want only a single spark of fire to set them in combustion. Frequently it is the hand of a hair-brained minister that puts them in explosion; he sets fire at once to the north and the south, to the two extremities of the earth. What an immense quantity of cannons, mortars, muskets, balls, bullets, swords, balloons, &c. of murdering slaves, obedient to the whip of discipline, attend the orders of a cabinet, to display its bloody parade! Geometry itself has profaned its divine attributes by assisting the fury sometimes of ambitious, and sometimes capricious sovereigns. With what precision do they destroy an army, bombard a camp, besiege or burn a city! I have seen academicians in cool blood consult on the charging a cannon. Alas! gentlemen, stay till you have at least a principality. What imports it you whose name governs in any particular country? Your patriotism is a false virtue, and dangerous to humanity. Let us examine a little into the signification of the word *patriot*. To have an attachment to any state, it is necessary to be a member of that state. Now, if you except two or three republics, there is, properly speaking, no such thing as a country. Why should the Englishman be my enemy? I am connected to him by commerce, by the arts, and by every other relation possible; there is no natural antipathy between us. Why, therefore, would you, that by passing certain limits, I should separate my interest from that of other men? What we call patriotism is a phantasy invented by kings, and destructive to mankind; for, if my nation were three times less than it is, I should have three times as many more to hate; my affections therefore must depend on the variable limits of dominions; in the course of the same year, I must destroy my neighbour,

things, thoſe poets were extremely fond of deſcribing a battle."—Oh! I entreat you, ſpeak no more of the epidemic diſeaſe which then afflicted the human race. Alas! they were all ſeized with the ſymptoms of rage and folly; cowardly kings, from their faſtuous thrones, gave the word for murder; and the paſſive herd, guarded by one dog only, ran cheerfully to the ſlaughter. How was it poſſible to reclaim them at that time of illuſion? how break the magic taliſman? A little club, a ribband red or blue, a ſmall enamelled croſs, communicated every where a ſpirit of intoxication and fury. Others became poſſeſſed by the mere ſight of a cockade, or a few doits. The cure neceſſarily required time; but I was fully convinced, that, ſooner or later, the lenient balm of philoſophy would cicatriſe all thoſe ſhameful wounds*.

The

and be friends with him that I endeavoured to maſſacre the day before; ſo that, in fact, I only maintain the rights of a capricious maſter, who would hold my ſoul in ſubjection. No; in my judgment, Europe ſhould form but one vaſt ſtate; and I dare to wiſh that it may be united under one government. All things properly conſidered, it would be highly advantageous. Then I could be in reality a patriot; but at the preſent day, what is it we call liberty? "Nothing more," (ſays a certain writer) "than the heroiſm of ſlavery."

* What a ſight! two hundred thouſand men ſpread over a vaſt country, and only wait for the ſignal to cut each other's throats, to maſſacre one another in the face of the ſun and amidſt the flowers of the ſpring. It is not hatred that excites

They conducted me to the cabinet of the mathematics. It appeared richly ſtored, and in the moſt perfect order. They had baniſhed from this ſcience all that reſembled the ſport of children, all that was merely dry and trifling ſpeculation, or that ſurpaſſed the bounds of the human capacity. I ſaw machines of every kind that were proper to aſſiſt the arm of man, and ſuch as contained much greater powers than are known to us; they were adapted to all ſorts of motions; and by the aid of theſe, the heavieſt weights were managed with facility.—"You have ſeen," they ſaid, "thoſe obeliſks, thoſe triumphal arches, thoſe palaces, and other ſtately buildings that aſtoniſh the ſight. They are not the produce of mere ſtrength, of numbers, or dexterity: it is by the aid of finiſhed machines, that they have been conſtructed." In a word, I here found the greateſt variety of the moſt accurate inſtruments for the uſe of geometry, aſtronomy, and the other ſciences.

All they who had attempted experiments that were new, bold, maſterly, and that promiſed great utility, even though they did not ſucceed (for inſtruction may be gained from diſappointment) had their buſts erected, and decorated with their proper attributes.

They

excites them: no; they are commanded by kings to murder each other. If this cruel event had never happened but once, would not they who had not been witneſſes to it, have had a juſt right to doubt its veracity? This thought is M. Gaillard's.

They whiſpered, moreover, that many remarkable, and even wonderful ſecrets, were confided to the care of a ſmall number of their ſages? for there are matters, good in themſelves, that may be abuſed in their application*. The human mind, in their opinion, was not yet ſufficiently ſtrong to make uſe of the moſt rare or moſt powerful diſcoveries without danger †.

CHAP.

* King Ezechias (as the Scripture informs us) ſuppreſſed a book that treated of the virtues of plants, for fear that, by making a wrong uſe of it, they ſhould even create diſeaſes. The fact is curious, and affords matter for much reflection.

† What a horrible day was that for the human race, when a monk formed of ſalt-petre a murdering powder! Arioſto tells us, that the devil having invented a carabine, touched by pity, threw it into a river. Alas! There is no longer any aſylum upon the earth; courage now is uſeleſs; the artillery is in the hands of a ſmall number of men, and renders them abſolute maſters of our exiſtence.

CHAP. XXXII.

THE ACADEMY OF PAINTING.

AS the arts among this people are connected not only in a figurative, but in a real ſenſe; before I had gone many ſteps I found myſelf at the academy of painting. I entered ſeveral large ſaloons, adorned with the works of the greateſt maſters, each of which afforded a moral and inſtructive treatiſe. There was no longer ſeen that perpetual mythology, a thouſand times repeated, which though ingenious in the infancy of the art, was now become diſguſtful. The moſt pleaſing objects loſe at laſt their charms: repetition is the language of a dunce. Thus it had happened to all thoſe groſs flatteries, with which the fawning painters had deified Lewis XIV. Time, like truth, had devoured all the lying canvas; as it had ſent to their proper place the inſipid verſes of Boileau, and the prologues of Quinault, the arts were forbid to falſify*. There, moreover, no longer exiſted any of

*When I ſee, in the gallery of Verſailles, Lewis XIV. with a thunderbolt in his hand, ſeated upon the azure clouds, like an avenging deity, the diſdainful pity I feel for the pencil of Le Brun is almoſt reflected on the art: but when I conſider that the painting ſurvives both the thundering god, and the artiſt who created him, I ſmile.

The firſt time Lewis XIV. ſaw a Teniers, he turned away his head with an air of diſdain, and ordered it to be removed

of that order of men they called connoiſſeurs, who directed the artiſt with a golden ingot in their hands. Genius was free, followed its own laws, and no longer debaſed itſelf.

Among theſe moral paintings there were ſeen no brutal battles, no ſhameful debaucheries of the fabulous gods, much leſs ſovereigns ſurrounded by virtues of which they were remarkably deficient. Such ſubjects only as were proper to inſpire ſentiments of dignity and virtue were here exhibited. All the pagan divinities, equally abſurd and ſcandalous, were avoided by the precious pencil, now deſtined to commemorate the moſt important actions; by which is meant thoſe that give a noble idea of man; ſuch as clemency, generoſity, perſeverance, courage, and a diſdain of luxury.

I found that they had exhibited all thoſe important ſubjects that deſerve to paſs down to poſterity; the greatneſs of ſoul conſpicuous in certain ſovereigns was in particular immortalized. I ſaw Henry IV. nouriſhing the city he beſieged; Sully ſlowly counting out a ſum of money, that was deſtined for his maſter's pleaſures; Lewis XIV. on his death-bed, crying out, "I now find I have been too fond of war;" Trajan tearing his veſtment to bind up the wounds of an unhappy

removed from the apartment. If that monarch was diſguſted with thoſe good folks that dance and ſing; if he preferred the furious trooper ſcowering through the duſt and ſmoke of a camp, the complexion of his mind is manifeſt.

unhappy man; Marcus Aurelius deſcending from his horſe, during a haſty enterprize, to receive the petition of a poor woman. Titus diſtributing food and remedies to the ſick. St. Hilaire ſtretching out his arm and ſhowing his ſon, who wept, Turenne ſeated amidſt the duſt; the generous Fabius putting on the chains of a galley-ſlave in the room of his father, &c. I ſaw no gloomy or cruel ſubjects. No beggarly courtiers here ſaid with a ſneer, "Even the painters now preach!" Every one acknowledged their merit, in having ſelected the moſt ſublime objects in human nature, that is, grand repreſentations of the ſubjects of hiſtory. They had wiſely determined that nothing was more important. All the arts had made, ſo to ſay, a wonderful aſſociation in favour of humanity. This happy agreement had thrown a greater luſtre on the ſacred effigy of virtue; it was become more adorable, and its aſpect, always charming, afforded a public inſtruction, as juſt as it was ſtriking. Alas! how is it poſſible to reſiſt the power of the fine arts, when with one voice they extol and dignify the free and noble citizen?

All theſe pictures attracted the eye, as well by the execution as by the deſign. Theſe painters had united the Flemiſh colouring with the Italian drawing; or rather they had, by a profound ſtudy, ſurpaſſed them. Honours, the only riches of the great man, at once animated and rewarded his labours. Nature ſeemed to appear as in a mirror. The friend of virtue was unable to contemplate theſe beautiful paintings without the tender ſigh of pleaſure. The guilty dared

not

not to look upon them; they feared leſt theſe animated figures ſhould aſſume a voice, accuſe, and confound them.

They told me that theſe pictures were exhibited to the people; ſtrangers were alſo admitted; for they practiſed not that mean tyranny which excludes all who come from beyond a certain limit. Every year they propoſed four ſubjects, that the artiſt might have time to give his work a due degree of perfection. The moſt finiſhed eaſily obtained the ſuffrage of the people; for attention was paid to the general voice, which is commonly that of equity itſelf. The others, however, were ſure to receive their due portion of praiſe. They were far from the injuſtice of diſcouraging the ſcholar. The eſtabliſhed maſters were void of that unworthy and baſe jealouſy which baniſhed Pouſſin far from his country, and cauſed Le Seur to periſh in the flower of his day. They had diveſted themſelves of that dangerous and fatal prejudice, which, in my time, permitted no ſcholar to follow any other manner than that of his maſter. They did not make inſipid copyiſts of thoſe who, directed by good precepts and then left to themſelves, would have attained the height of their profeſſion. The diſciple, in a word, did not bend under a yoke that rendered him ſpiritleſs; nor pace, with ſlow and trembling ſteps, after a capricious maſter, and one too, whom he was obliged to flatter. If he proved to be a man of genius, he went before him, and his preceptor was the firſt to glory in his advancement.

There

There were several academies of drawing, painting, sculpture, and practical geometry. These arts, dangerous in my age, because they encouraged luxury, pride, cupidity, and debauchery, were now become highly useful, as they were only employed to inspire sentiments of virtue, and to give to the city that majesty, those charms, that noble and simple taste, which by a secret connection elevates the minds of the people.

These schools were open to the public. The disciples worked under its auspices. Every one was permitted to declare his opinion. This did not, however, prevent the authorised directors from making a proper inspection. But no scholar was considered as dependent on any particular master, but as related to them all in general. By avoiding the appearance of a despotic power, so fatal to a masterly and free genius, they were enabled to produce artists who had surpassed the chef-d'œuvres of antiquity. Their paintings were so highly finished, that the remains of Raphael and Rubens were no longer sought after, but by some obstinate and opinionated antiquaries.

It is needless to say that all the arts and professions were equally free. It is only in a weak, barbarous, and tyrannic age, that fetters are given to industry; that a sum of money is required of him who would labour in any profession, instead of affording him a recompence. All those little ludicrous corporations serve no other purpose, by collecting a number of people together, but to ferment their passions to a more

more violent degree. A multitude of indeterminable incidents arise from that bondage, which necessarily render them enemies to each other. So in a prison, men, when chained together, communicate their rancour and their vices. By endeavouring to prevent private interests, they have rendered it more active, which is just the contrary to what a wise legislature should pursue. A thousand disorders proceed from this perpetual constraint, by which men are prevented from exercising their particular talents. From hence spring idleness and fraud. The misfortune arises from the impotence of those who would relieve themselves from that deplorable state in which they are held by an arm of brass, and which nothing but gold can relax. The monarch, to enjoy a trifling tribute, has destroyed the most sacred liberty, and choaked up all the sources of spirit and industry.

Among these people, well instructed in the rights of mankind, each one followed that particular employ to which his genius led him; the sure pledge of success. They who had no propensity to the fine arts, applied themselves to more attainable professions; for no mediocrity is allowed in works of genius. The glory of the nation appears to be affected by those talents, which distinguish not only men, but empires.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

EMBLEMATICAL PAINTINGS.

I ENTERED a ſeparate apartment, where they had repreſented the ſeveral ages. To each of them was given, beſides its natural phyſiognomy, thoſe features by which it was diſtinguiſhed from its brethren. The age of ignorance was clothed in a black and mournful robe. Her eyes were red and gloomy, and in her hand ſhe bore a torch. At a diſtance was ſeen a funeral pile, before which ſtood prieſts covered with a long veil, and human victims, their eyes concealed by bandages, who were devoted to the flames.

Further on I ſaw a wild enthuſiaſt, without any other merit than that of a heated imagination, with which he fired thoſe of his fellow citizens, not leſs inflammable; and by thundering forth the name of the deity, he drew after him a croud of people, as a docile herd run after the voice of the ſhepherd. Even kings quitted their thrones, abandoned their depopulated ſtates, and believing they heard a voice from heaven, ſacrificed themſelves, their crowns, and their ſubjects, in the midſt of vaſt deſerts. In the back ground was ſeen Superſtition ſtriding over the heads of mankind, and ſhaking her murdering torch. Gigantic monſter! her feet touched the two extremities of the earth, and her arm, holding the palm of martyrdom, was extended to the clouds.

Another less ardent but more contemplative, was devoted to mystery and allegory, and wrapt up in the marvellous; was constantly surrounded by enigmas, and endeavouring to thicken the shades by which he was enveloped. There were seen the Platonic years, numbers of Pythagoras, the verses of the sybils, the powerful charms of magic, and those prestiges, sometimes ingenious and sometimes insipid, that the mind of man has created.

Another held in his hand an astrolabe, attentively regarded the calendar, and calculated the hours fortunate and unfortunate. A cold and silent gravity was imprinted on his protracted visage. He turned pale at the conjunction of two stars. The present hour was nothing to him, and the future was his executioner. His religion was directed by the ridiculous jargon of astrology, and he embraced that phantom as an immoveable column.

Then appeared a figure covered with armour; his head was enclosed in a brazen helmet, and in his hand he bore a lance. He breathed nothing but single combat. The soul of this hero was more hardened than the steel that covered him. It was by arms alone that right, opinion, justice, and truth, were to be decided. In the back ground were seen the field of combat, judges and heralds supported the vanquished, or rather the guilty.

In another part was seen a figure totally burlesque. A Gothic architect, erecting columns that had no proportion

proportion to the weight they supported, and which were charged with ridiculous ornaments; and those he thought a refinement in building, unknown to the Greeks or Romans. The same irregularity was conspicuous in his logic, which consisted of abstract ideas, and perpetual chicanery. At a distance were seen a sort of sleep-walkers, who talked and acted with their eyes open, but, plunged in a long dream, never connected two ideas, unless by chance.

Thus every age successively presented itself; but the detail would be here too long. I stood for some time regarding the eighteenth century, induced by my ancient connection with it. It was represented by the painter under the figure of a woman. A number of borrowed and costly ornaments loaded her proud and delicate head. Her neck, her arms, and breast, were covered with pearls and diamonds. Her eyes were bright and sparkling, but a somewhat affected smile gave an air of grimace to her mouth. Her cheeks were covered with a flaming red. Art appeared to be mixed with her words, as with her looks; they were alluring but not true. She held in each hand a long rose-coloured ribband, which seemed ornaments, but concealed two iron chains, by which she was strongly bound. She had, however, liberty enough to gesticulate, to prance, and gambol, and this she did to excess, in order, (as it should seem) to disguise her slavery, or at least to make it more easy and pleasing. I examined her figure with attention, and tracing the drapery of her vestment, I perceived that her pompous robe was at the bottom

in tatters, and covered with dirt. Her naked feet were plunged in a kind of bog; her lower extremities were as hideous as her head was brilliant. She appeared in this dress not much unlike one of those strumpets who walk the streets at the beginning of the night. I discovered behind her a number of children, with meagre livid aspects, who cried to their mother while they devoured a morsel of black bread. She endeavoured to hide them with her robe, but between the tatters those wretched infants still appeared. At a distance in the picture were seen superb palaces, buildings of marble, parterres artfully laid out, vast forests peopled with deer, where the horn resounded from afar. But the country, half uncultivated, was filled with wretched peasants, who harassed by fatigue, sunk under their burthens: then appeared men who forced away part of them to the wars, and took from the rest their beds and their kettles*.

The

* Tyranny is a dangerous tree which should be rooted out as soon as planted. The beauty of this tree is deceitful. While young it appears crowned with flowers and laurels, but is secretly nourished by blood. It soon grows, spreads its branches, and lifts its lofty head. It covers all that surrounds it with a fatuous and deadly shade. The neighbouring fruits and flowers perish, deprived of the beneficent rays of the sun, which it intercepts. It compels the earth to nourish none but itself. It at last becomes like that venomous tree, whose sweet fruit is poison, and that changes the drops of rain which distil from its leaves into a corrosive fluid, that gives the weary traveller at once sleep and death. In the mean time its trunk becomes knotty, its sap is changed into

The characters of the different nations were expreſſed with equal fidelity. By colours variegated with a thouſand mixtures, by a gloomy and melancholy countenance, was diſtinguiſhed the jealous and vindictive Italian. In the ſame picture his thoughtful looks diſappeared in the midſt of a concert; the painter had ſeized with remarkable addreſs, that criſis to make him become ſupple in an inſtant. The back ground contained a repreſentation of the droll jeſts of pantomimes.

The Engliſhman, in an attitude rather haughty than majeſtic, ſtanding upon the point of a rock, commanded the ocean, and gave to a veſſel the ſignal to viſit the new world, and bring him back its treaſures. His bold looks declared that his private liberty was equal to that of the public. Contending fleets, growling under the ſtrokes of the tempeſt, afforded his ear ſweet harmony. His hand was conſtantly ready to ſeize the ſword of civil war, and with a ſmile he looked ſtedfaſt at a ſcaffold, on which fell a head and a crown.

The German, under a ſky that flaſhed with lightning, was deaf to the roaring of the elements: it was hard to ſay whether he braved them, or was inſenſible. His eagles tore each other by his ſide, which to him was mere diverſion. Wrapped up in himſelf

into hard wood, and the branches of its brazen root are extended; the ax of liberty becomes blunt, and can make no impreſſion on it.

he beheld his deſtiny with a philoſophic or inſenſible eye.

The Frenchman full of noble and elevated graces, preſented a refined aſpect. His figure was not original, but his manner was great. Imagination and judgment were expreſſed in his countenance; he ſmiled with an addreſs that ſeemed to approach deceit. There ran through the whole of his figure much uniformity. His colours were pleaſing, but there was nothing of that boldneſs, nor of that fine effect of lights, which were admired in the other pictures. The ſight was fatigued by a multiplicity of details, that reciprocally injured each other. An innumerable crowd bore little drums, which they were continually beating, and thought they imitated the roaring of cannon: It was a paſſion, as buſy and boiſterous, as it was weak and tranſient.

CHAP. XXXIV.

SCULPTURE AND ENGRAVING.

SCULPTURE, not less pleasing than her elder sister, displayed in turn all the wonders of her art, which was no longer prostituted to those impudent sons of wealth, who debased it by executing representations of their venal figures, or some other subject equally despicable. The artist, provided for by the government, consecrated his talent to merit and virtue only. There was not here seen, as in our apartments, by the side of the king's bust, the vile tax-gatherer who deceived and defrauded him, presenting without shame his base physiognomy. Does a man, by advancing himself in a career of memorable actions become worthy of the regard of posterity? Does another perform some great and valiant exploit? The animated artist then charges himself with the public acknowledgment; he meditates in private one of the most masterly performances of his days, and, without adding the portrait of the author, he presently produces his work and obtains permission to immortalize himself with the hero; his labour strikes every eye, and has no need of a frigid commentary. The sculptor was expresly forbid those subjects that did not speak to the mind, and consequently the fine marble, or other matters equally valuable, were no longer wasted.

All those licentious subjects that loaded our chimney pieces were strictly prohibited. Men of merit had

had no conception of our legiſlation, when they read in hiſtory that in an age which ſo frequently pronounced the words Religion and Morality, the father of a family ſhould exhibit ſcenes of debauchery to the eyes of his children, under pretence that they were maſter-pieces of art; that they ſhould expoſe objects capable of heating the moſt tranquil imagination, and of filling young minds, open to every impreſſion, with diſorderly ideas; they were grieved at this public and criminal practice of depraving the mind before it was completely formed*.

An

* Among other public abuſes propoſed to be redreſſed, may be ranked theſe licentious ſhews that offend not only againſt ſound morals but good ſenſe, equally reſpectable. When ſpeaking of the theatres, we forget to mention the tumblers and rope-dancers; but the diſpoſition of a work is of no great moment, provided the author there includes all his ideas. I ſhall, like Montaigne, turn back upon every occaſion; I diſregard the cenſure of the critics; I flatter myſelf, that, at leaſt, I ſhall not be, like them, diſguſtful. To return then to the tumblers and rope-dancers, ſo common and ſo ſhocking; ſhould they be tolerated by humane magiſtrates? After having employed all their time in exerciſes equally aſtoniſhing and frivolous, they riſk their lives in public, and tell a thouſand ſpectators, that the death of a man is a matter of very little conſequence. The attitudes of theſe performers are beſide indecent, and offend both the eye and the heart. They perhaps alſo accuſtom minds not yet formed, to find no pleaſure but in that which is attended with danger, and to think that the life of a man may make part of our diverſions. It will be ſaid, that this is moralizing on very trifling ſubjects; but I have remarked that theſe wretched performances

An artiſt, to whom I applied for information, carefully explained to me all theſe great changes. He told me, that in the nineteenth century there was a great ſcarcity of marble, ſo that they were obliged to have recourſe to the heap of financiers, tax-gatherers, and ſecretaries buſts, which were ſo many blocks in part ready prepared; they were therefore eaſily reformed, and became finiſhed pieces.

I paſſed into the laſt gallery, not leſs curious than the others for the multiplicity of pieces it contained. There was aſſembled an univerſal collection of drawings and engravings. Notwithſtanding the great improvements in the laſt art, they had preſerved the works of the preceding ages; for it is not with prints as with books; a book muſt be either good or bad, whereas a print, which preſents itſelf to the eye only, may always ſerve as an object of compariſon.

This gallery, which owed its origin to the age of Lewis XV. was now very differently diſpoſed. It was no longer a ſmall room, in the midſt of which was a ſmall table that could ſcarce contain a dozen artiſts, and where you might go ten times before you found a vacant place. That cloſet, moreover, was open only on certain days, in the whole ſcarce a tenth part of the year, and which ſmall portion was liable to be abridged at any time by the caprice of

performances have much more influence on the multitude than all thoſe arts that have ſome appearance of rationality.

of the director. These galleries were open every day, and committed to the care of polite assistants, who were punctually paid, that they might serve the public with the same punctuality. In this spacious room, you were sure to find a print of each painting and sculpture contained in the other galleries; it presented an abridgment of those chef-d'œuvres, which they had laboured to immortalize, and to diffuse to the greatest degree possible.

Engraving is as fruitful and happy as printing; it has the advantage of multiplying its impression, as printing does its copies; and by that means every private person, every stranger, may procure a rival copy of a painting. All the inhabitants decorate, without jealousy, their walls with these interesting subjects, which represent examples of virtue and heroism. We no longer see those pretended connoisseurs, no less futile than ignorant, who pursue an imaginary perfection at the expence of their ease and their wealth, constantly liable to be duped, and to which they were remarkably disposed.

I ran over with avidity those voluminous works in which the engraver had described, with so much facility and precision, not only the contours, but the colours of nature; all the paintings were expressed to perfection; but what had most engaged their attention were those objects that relate to the arts and sciences. The plates of the Encyclopedia had been entirely re-engraved, and they had more carefully attended to that rigorous precision which is their chief merit,

merit, as the leaſt error is of the higheſt conſequence. I obſerved a magnificent courſe of natural philoſophy treated in the ſame manner; and as that ſcience is, in a peculiar manner, the object of the ſenſes, it is by the figures relative to it, that, perhaps, we attain juſt ideas of all its parts. An art that affords ſo many uſeful ſubjects is deſerving of high eſteem, and they had here given it freſh marks of conſideration.

I obſerved, that all was executed in true taſte; that they followed the manner of Gerrard Audran, and which they had improved by carrying it to the higheſt degree of perfection poſſible. The flouriſhes in books were no longer called cochins; and many other like miſerable phraſes were aboliſhed*.

The engravers had deſiſted from the uſe of that pernicious glaſs, which deſtroyed their ſight entirely. The connoiſſeurs of this age were no admirers of thoſe little points in which all the merit of modern engraving conſiſts; they preferred large, free, regular ſtrokes, that expreſſed every thing with certain touches that were juſt and nobly deſigned. The engraver readily conſulted the painter, who, in his turn, avoided affecting the caprice of a maſter. They eſteemed one another, they lived together as friends and equals, and were far from reflecting the faults of any work on each other. Engraving was, moreover,

* M. Voltaire ſhould be ſatisfied before-hand; he, who has ſo long pleaded for this important reformation.

moreover, become of great advantage to the ſtate, by the commerce of prints with foreigners, ſo that of theſe artiſts it may be ſaid, that under their propitious hands copper becomes gold.

CHAP. XXXV.

THE HALL OF AUDIENCE.

I COULD not quit theſe rich galleries without the greateſt regret; but my inſatiable curioſity, that would leave nothing unſeen, carried me into the centre of the city. I ſaw a great multitude, compoſed of each ſex, and of every age, that flocked with precipitation toward a portal that was magnificently decorated. I heard from different parts, "Let us make haſte! our good king has, perhaps, already mounted his throne; we ſhall ſcarce ſee him aſcend it to-day."—I followed the crowd, but was much aſtoniſhed to find that there were no ferocious guards to beat back the thronging people. I came to a moſt ſpacious hall, ſupported by many columns; I advanced, and at laſt came near to the monarch's throne. No; It is impoſſible to conceive an idea of royal majeſty more pleaſing, more auguſt, more graceful and engaging. I was melted, even to tears. I ſaw no thundering Jupiter, no terrible apparatus, no inſtruments of vengeance. Four figures of white marble, repreſenting fortitude, temperance, juſtice,

and clemency, supported a plain armed chair of white ivory, which was elevated merely to extend the voice. The chair was crowned with a canopy, supported by a hand, the arm of which seemed to come out of the vaulted roof. On each side of the throne there were two tables; on one side was engraved the law of the state, and the limits of the royal authority; and on the other, the duties of kings and of subjects. In front was a woman suckling a child; a faithful emblem of royalty. The first step to the throne, was in the form of a tomb. Upon it was wrote in large characters, ETERNITY. Under this step reposed the embalmed body of the last monarch, there to remain till deplaced by his son. From thence he cried to his heirs, that they were all mortal; that the dream of royalty was near finished; that then nothing would remain to them but their renown.

This vast place was already filled with people, when I saw the monarch approach, clothed in a blue mantle that gracefully flowed behind him; his forehead was bound with a branch of olive, that was his diadem; he never appeared in public without this respectable ornament, which was revered by others and by himself. There were loud acclamations when he mounted the throne, and he did not appear insensible to the cries of joy. Scarce was he seated, when an awful silence was spread over the whole assembly. I listened with attention. His ministers read to him, with a loud voice, an account of every thing remarkable that had passed since the last audience. If the truth had been disguised, the peo-

ple were there to confound the detractor. Their demands were not forgot. An account was rendered of the execution of orders before given. This reading always concluded with the daily price of provisions and merchandize. The monarch hears, and approves by a nod, or refers the matter to a more minute examination. But if from the bottom of the hall there should be heard a voice complaining, or condemning any one article, though it were that of the meanest citizen, he is brought forward to a little circle formed before the throne; there he explains his ideas*; and if he appear to be right, he is attended to, applauded, and thanked; the sovereign regards him with a favourable aspect; but if, on the contrary, he advances nothing to the purpose, or what appears plainly to be founded on private advantage, he is dismissed with disgrace, and the hoots of the people follow him to the door. Every man may present himself without any other apprehension than that of incurring the public derision, if what he propose be unjust or self-interested.

Two

* It is one of the greatest misfortunes in France, that the police and administration of all affairs is directed entirely by the magistrates, by men invested with a place and a title, who never deign to consult (at least on the part of the public) private persons that are frequently endowed with knowledge and sagacity to an eminent degree. The most worthy and accomplished citizen cannot display his useful talents and the dignity of his sentiments, unless possessed of a public employment: he must stifle his noble designs, be a witness to the most flagrant abuses, and be silent.

Two principal officers of the crown accompany the monarch in all public ceremonies, and walk by his ſide; the one carries, on the point of a ſpear, an ear of corn, and the other a branch of the vine*, which ſerve conſtantly to remind him that they are the two ſupports of the ſtate and the throne. He is followed by the pantler of the crown, bearing a baſket of loaves, which he diſtributes to every one that aſks. This baſket is the ſure thermometer of the public diſtreſs; and when it is found empty, the miniſters are diſmiſſed and puniſhed; the baſket, however, conſtantly remains full, and declares the public proſperity.

This auguſt ſeſſion is held every week, and laſts three hours. I went from the hall with a heart filled with complacency, and with the profoundeſt reſpect for this monarch, whom I loved as a father, and revered as a protecting divinity.

I converſed with ſeveral perſons on all that I had ſeen and heard; they were ſurpriſed at my aſtoniſhment; all theſe things ſeemed to them quite ſimple and natural.—"Why," ſaid one of them, "will you have the raſhneſs to compare the preſent time to an extravagant and capricious age; that entertained falſe ideas of the moſt ſimple matters, when pride

* The emperor Tai-ſung walking in the country, and ſeeing a number of peaſants at work, ſaid to his ſon, who attended him, "Without the ſweat and labour of theſe men, neither you nor I ſhould have any empire."

pride was greatneſs, when ſplendor and oſtentation were all, and when virtue was regarded as a phantom, the mere imagination of dreaming philoſophers*."

CHAP. XXXVI.

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

MAY I aſk what is the preſent form of government? Is it monarchical, democratic, or ariſtocratic†?—"It is neither of them; it is rational, and made for man. Monarchy is no more. Monarchical governments, as you knew, though to little purpoſe, loſe themſelves in deſpotiſm, as the rivers are loſt in the boſom of the ocean; and deſpotiſm ſoon ſinks under

* We ſhould pay a reſpect to popular prejudices! is the language of narrow and puſillanimous ſouls, to whom the mere exiſtence of a law is ſufficient to make it ſacred. Does the man of virtue, to whom alone it belongs to love or hate, acknowledge this criminal moderation? No; he charges himſelf with the public vengeance, his right is founded on his genius, and the juſtice of his cauſe on the acknowledgment of poſterity.

† The genius of a nation does not depend on the atmoſphere that ſurrounds it; the climate is not the phyſical cauſe of its grandeur or debaſement. Force and courage belong to all the people of the earth; but the cauſes that put

under its own weight*. This has been all literally accomplished, and never was there a more certain prophecy.

" When

put them in motion and sustain them, are derived from certain circumstaces, that are sometimes sudden, sometimes slow in their operations; but, sooner or later, they never fail to arrive. Happy are the people who, by information or by instinct, seize the crisis!

* Would you know what are the general principles that habitually prevail in the councils of a monarch? here follows the substance of what is there done. Taxes of every kind should be multiplied, for the prince can never be rich enough, considering that he is obliged to maintain armies and the officers of his houshold, who ought, by all means, to be extremely magnificent. If the people complain of these loads they do wrong, and must be curbed.

No injustice can be done them, for in reality they have nothing but what the good will of the prince gives them, and which he may take again whenever he shall think fit, especially if the interest or splendor of his crown require it. Beside, it is notorious, that a people at their ease, and in the midst of plenty, become less laborious, and may become insolent. We should therefore retrench their prosperity that we may add to their submission. The poverty of the subject is for ever the strongest rampart of a monarch; and the poorer the individuals are, the more obedient the nation will be. Once taught to submit, they will perform it by habit, which is the most certain method of being obeyed. It is not sufficient that they merely submit, they should be taught to believe that the spirit of wisdom here presides in the highest perfection and submit accordingly, without

"When we consider the lights that have been acquired, it would doubtless be a disgrace to the human race, to have measured the distance between the sun and the earth, to have weighed the heavenly orbs, and not to have discovered those simple and efficacious laws by which mankind should be governed. It is true, that pride, luxury, and self interest produce a thousand obstacles; but how glorious is it to discover the means of making those private passions subservient to the general good! The vessel that plows the ocean commands the elements at the same moment that it is obedient to their empire; submissive to a double impulse, it incessantly re-acts against them. You there see, perhaps, the most lively image of

daring to dispute about the decrees that proceed from our infallible knowledge.

If a philosopher should have access to this prince, and advancing to the midst of his council, should say to him, "Take heed how you give credit to these evil counsellors; you are surrounded by the enemies of your family: your grandeur and security are founded less on an arbitrary power than on the love of your people. If they are unhappy they will the more ardently wish for a revolution, and will shake either your throne or that of your children. The people are immortal but you must pass away. The majesty of the throne resides more in a truly paternal tenderness, than in an unlimited power; that power is violent, and contrary to the order of nature. By being more moderate, you will become more potent. Set an example of justice, and know that it is by morality alone that a prince becomes powerful and respectable." This philosopher would certainly be taken for an enthusiast, and perhaps they would not even vouchsafe to punish him for his virtue.

of a ſtate; borne up by tempeſtuous paſſions, it receives from them its movements, and at the ſame time reſiſts the ſtorm. "The art of the *pilot* is all." Your political light was nothing more than a crepuſcle; and you wretchedly complained of the Author of nature, at the ſame time that he had given you both intelligence and ſtrength for government. There only wanted a loud voice to rouſe the multitude from their lethargy. If oppreſſion thundered on your heads, you ought to have accuſed your own weakneſs only. Liberty and happineſs appertain to thoſe who dare to ſeize them. All is revolution in this world; the moſt happy of all has had its point of maturity, and we have gathered its fruits*.

"Freed from oppreſſion, we have taken care not to place all the ſtrength and ſprings of government, all the rights and attributes of power, in the hands of one man†. Inſtructed by the misfortunes of paſt ages,

* In certain ſtates it is an epoch that becomes neceſſary; an epoch terrible and bloody, but the ſignal of liberty. It is of a civil war that I ſpeak. It is that calls forth all the men of exalted genius, ſome to attack, and others to defend liberty. A civil war diſplays the moſt hidden talents. Men of wonderful abilities ariſe, and appear worthy to command the human race. It is a horrid remedy! But in the ſtupor of a ſtate when the minds of men are plunged in a deep lethargy, it becomes neceſſary.

† A deſpotic government is nothing more than a league between a ſovereign and a ſmall number of favourite ſubjects, in order to cheat and plunder the reſt. In that caſe the

ages, we are become less imprudent. If Socrates or Marcus Aurelius should again visit the earth, we should not confide to them, an arbitrary power; not from a mistrust, but from a fear of depreciating the sacred character of a free citizen. Is not the law the voice of the general will of the people? And how can we dare to commit so important a deposit to a single man? Has he not his unguarded moments? And, even supposing him to be free from them, shall men resign that liberty which is their most valuable inheritance*.

" We

the monarch or he that represents him, divides and destroys society, becomes a separate and central body, that lights up every passion as it lists, and sets them in motion for its personal interest. He creates justice and injustice, his humour becomes a law, and his favour the measure of public esteem. This system is too violent to be durable. Justice, on the contrary, is a barrier that equally protects the subject and the prince. Liberty alone can form animated citizens, the only citizens, in fact, among rational beings. A king is never powerful but at the head of a free and contented people. The nation once debased, the throne sinks.

* Liberty begets miracles, it triumphs over nature, it causes harvests to grow upon rocks; it gives a smiling air to the most doleful regions; it enlightens the peasant, and makes him more penetrative than the proud slaves of the most polished court. Other climates, the most finished works of the creation, delivered up to servitude, exhibit nothing but desolated lands, pale and dejected visages, that dare not lift their eyes to heaven. Choose then, man! be happy or miserable; if yet it be in thy power to choose: fear tyranny, detest slavery, arm thyself, live free, or die.

"We have experienced how contrary an abſolute ſovereignty is to the true intereſt of a nation. The art of raiſing refined tributes, all the powers of that terrible machine progreſſively multiplied; the embarraſſment of the laws, one oppoſing another; chicanery devouring the poſſeſſions of individuals; the cities crowded by privileged tyrants; the venality of offices; miniſters and intendants treating the different parts of the kingdom as conquered countries; a ſubtle hardneſs of heart that juſtifies inhumanity; royal officers, who are in no degree reſponſible to the people, and who inſult them, inſtead of liſtening to their complaints; ſuch was the effect of that vigilant deſpotiſm which collected every intelligence, to employ it to a bad pupoſe; not unlike thoſe burning glaſſes that collect the ſun's rays, to deſtroy ſuch objects as are preſented to them. When we paſſed through France, that fine kingdom which nature has favoured with her propitious regards, what did we behold? Diſtricts deſolated by tax gatherers; cities become boroughs, and boroughs villages; the people pale and meagre; in a word, beggars inſtead of inhabitants. All theſe evils were known; but evident principles were avoided to embrace a ſyſtem of diſſipation*, and the ſhadows that were raiſed, authoriſed the general depredation.

"Can

* An intendant of the province, deſirous of giving the ****, who was going to Soiſſons, an idea of the abundance that reigned in France, cauſed the fruit-trees of the country round about to be dug up, and planted in the ſtreets of the city,

" Can you believe it? The revolution was effected without trouble, and by the heroiſm of one great man. A philoſophic prince, worthy of a throne, becauſe he regarded it with indifference; more ſolicitous for the happineſs of mankind than for the phantom of power, diſtruſting poſterity, and diſtruſting himſelf, offered to put the eſtates of the nation in poſſeſſion of their ancient prerogatives; he was ſenſible that in an extenſive kingdom there ſhould be an union of the different provinces in order to its being well governed; as in the human body beſide the general circulation, each part has one that is peculiarly adapted to itſelf; ſo each province, while it obeys the general laws, modifies thoſe that are peculiar to it, agreeable to its ſoil, its poſition, its commerce and reſpective intereſts. Hence all lives, all flouriſhes. The provinces are no longer devoted to ſerve the court and ornament the capital*. A blind order from

city, by digging up the pavement. Theſe trees he decorated with garlands of gilt paper. This intendant was, without knowing it, a very great painter.

* From error and ignoronce ſpring all the evils that oppreſs humanity. Man is wicked only becauſe he miſtakes his true intereſt. In ſpeculative phyſics, in aſtronomy, and mathematics, we may err without any real detriment; but politics will not admit of the leaſt error. There are vices in government more deſtructive than natural plagues. An error of this kind depopulates and impoveriſhes a kingdom. If the moſt ſevere, the moſt profound ſpeculation is ever neceſſary, it is in thoſe public and problematic caſes, where reaſons of equal weight hold the judgment in equilibrium. Nothing

from the throne, does not carry troubles into those parts where the king's eye has never penetrated. Each province is the guardian of its own security and its own happiness; its principle of life is not too far distant from it; it is within itself, always ready to assist the whole, and to remedy evils that may arise. The present succours are left to those who are intrusted in its welfare, and will not palliate the cure, much less will they rejoice at those incidents that may weaken their country.

"The absolute sovereignty is now abolished; the chief magistrate preserves the name of king; but he does not foolishly attempt to bear all that burden which oppressed his ancestors. The legislative power of the kingdom is lodged in the states assembled. The administration of affairs, as well political as civil,

Nothing is then more dangerous than the tricks of office; they produce inconceivable errors; and the state is not sensible of its condition till arrived on the brink of ruin. We cannot, therefore, be too clear in the complicated art of government, as the least deviation is a line that constantly recedes as it increases, and produces an immense error. The laws have been hitherto nothing more than palliatives, that have been turned into general remedies; they are, as has been very justly said, the off-spring of necessity, and not of philosophy; it belongs to the latter to correct their defects. But what courage, what zeal, what love of humanity must he have, who, from such a chaos, shall form a regular system! But, at the same time, where is the man that would be more dear to the human race? Let him remember, that it is of all objects the most important; that the happiness of mankind, and consequently their virtues, are therein highly interested.

civil, is assigned to the senate; and the monarch, armed with the sword of justice, watches over the execution of the laws. He proposes every useful establishment. The senate is responsible to the king, and the king and senate are responsible to the states; which are assembled every two years. All is there decided by the majority of voices. The enacting of new laws, the filling of vacant posts, and the redressing of grievances, appertain to them; particular, or unforeseen cases are left to the wisdom of the monarch.

"He is happy*, and his throne is fixed upon a basis the more solid, as his crown is guaranteed by the liberty of the nation†. Those souls, that would have

* M. d'Alembert says, that a king who does his duty is of all men the most miserable; and that he who does it not, is of all others the most to be pitied. But why is the king who does his duty the most miserable? Is it from the multiplicity of his labours? No; a happy labour is a real pleasure. Does he make no account of that inward satisfaction which arises from a consciousness of having promoted the happiness of mankind? Does he not believe that virtue is its own reward? Beloved by all except the wicked, can the heart of such a king be insensible to pleasure? Who has not felt the satisfaction that results from doing good? The king who does not fulfil his duty is the most to be pitied. Nothing more true, especially if he be sensible to remorse and infamy; if he be not, he is still more to be pitied. Nothing more just than this last proposition.

† It is good in every state, even in a republic, to have a limited chief. It is a sort of spectre, that drives away all

have been but mean, owe their virtue to that internal source of greatneſs. The citizen is not ſeparated from the ſtate; he is incorporated with it*, and, in return, he ſhows with what zeal he exerts himſelf, in all that can intereſt its glory.

" Every act publiſhed by the ſenate, explains, in a few words, its origin and its deſign. We cannot conceive how it was poſſible in your age, that pretended ſo much diſcernment, for magiſtrates to dare, in their ſurly pride, to publiſh dogmatic arrets, like the decrees of the theologians. As if the law was not the public reaſon; or it was not neceſſary that the people ſhould be inſtructed, in order to their more ready obedience. Thoſe ancient magiſtrates, who called themſelves the fathers of their country, muſt have been ignorant of the great art of perſuaſion; that art which acts ſo powerfully, and without labour; or rather, they muſt have had no fixed point of view, no determinate courſe, but ſometimes riotous and ſeditious, and ſometimes creeping ſlaves, they flattered or haraſſed the throne: by turns

projects from the mind of the ambitious. Royalty in this caſe is like a ſcare-crow in a field, that prevents the birds from feeding upon the corn.

* They who have ſaid, that in a monarchy, the king is the depoſitory of the will of the people, have aſſerted an abſurdity. There is, in fact, nothing more ridiculous, than for intelligent beings, like men, to ſay to one or more, " Will for us," the people have always ſaid to their monarch; " Act for us," after you have clearly underſtood what is our will.

turns wrangling for trifles, and selling the people for a bribe.

"You will readily believe that we have discarded those magistrates, accustomed from their youth to all that insensiblity which is necessary coolly to dispose of the property, the honour, and lives of their fellow-citizens. Bold in defence of their meanest privileges, careless of what concerned the public welfare, they sunk at last into a perpetual indolence, and even spared others the trouble of corrupting them. Very different are our magistrates; the title of fathers of their country, with which we honour them, they merit in the fullest extent of the term.

"The reins of government are now committed to wise and resolute hands, that pursue a regular plan. The laws reign, and no man is above them; which was a horrid evil in your Gothic government. The general good of the nation is founded on the security of each individual. No one fears man, but the laws; the sovereign himself is sensible that they hang over his head*. His vigilance renders the senators more

* Every government where one man alone is above the laws, and can violate them with impunity, must be iniquitous and unhappy. In vain has a man of genius employed all his talents to make us acquiesce in the principles of an Asiatic government: they offer too great violence to human nature. Behold the proud vessel that plows the ocean, there needs but an imperceptible passage to admit the water and cause her perdition. So one man that is above the law, may

attentive to their ſeveral duties; the confidence he repoſes in them ſoftens their labours, and his authority gives the neceſſary force and activity to their deciſions. Thus the ſceptre, which oppreſſed your kings, is light in the hands of our monarch. He is not a victim pompouſly decorated, and inceſſantly a ſacrifice to the exigencies of the ſtate; he bears that burthen only which is proportioned to the limited ſtrength he has received from nature.

"We have a prince that fears the Almighty, that is pious and juſt, whoſe heart is devoted to God and his country, who dreads the divine vengeance, and the cenſure of poſterity, and who regards a good conſcience, and a ſpotleſs fame, as the higheſt degree of felicity. It is not ſo much great talents, or an

may cauſe thoſe acts of injuſtice and iniquity to enter a ſtate, which, by an inevitable effect, will haſten its ruin. What matters it whether we periſh by one or many? The misfortune is the ſame. What imports it whether tyranny have a hundred arms, or one only, that extends itſelf over the whole empire; if it fall on every individual, if it ſpring out freſh at the very inſtant it is cut off? Beſide, it is not deſpotiſm that terrifies and confounds; it is its propagation. The viziers, the pachas, &c. imitate their maſters; they devour others while they expect to be devoured. In the government of Europe, their ſhocks, the ſimultaneous reaction of their ſeveral bodies, affords moments of equilibrium, during which the people breathe; the limits of their reſpective powers, perpetually diſordered, holds the place of liberty; and the phantom is, at leaſt conſolatory to thoſe who cannot attain the reality.

an extenſive knowledge, that does good, as the ſincere deſire of an upright heart that loves it, and wiſhes to accompliſh it. Frequently the boaſted genius of a monarch, far from advancing the happineſs of a kingdom, is exerted in deſtroying its liberties.

" We have conciliated what ſeemed almoſt incompatible, the good of the nation with that of individuals. They even pretended that the general happineſs of a ſtate was neceſſarily diſtinct from that of ſome of its members. We have not eſpouſed that barbarous policy, founded either on an ignorance of juſt laws, or on a contempt of the pooreſt, but moſt uſeful men in the ſtate. There were cruel and deteſtable laws that ſuppoſed men to be wicked; but we are much diſpoſed to believe that they have only become ſo ſince the inſtitution of thoſe laws. Arbitrary power has griped the human heart, and by its irritation has rendered it enflamed and ulcerated.

" Our monarch has every neceſſary power and opportunity to do good, but is prevented from doing evil. We repreſent the nation to him always in a favourable light; we diſplay its valour, its fidelity toward its prince, and its hatred of a foreign yoke.

" There are cenſors who have the right of expelling from about the prince all who are inclined to irreligion,

irreligion, to licentiouſneſs, to falſehood, and to that baneful art of covering virtue with ridicule*. We do not admit amongſt us that claſs of men, who, under the title of nobility (which, to render it completely ridiculous, was venal) crawled about the throne, and would follow no other profeſſion than that of a ſoldier or courtiers; who lived in idleneſs, fed their pride with old parchments, and diſplayed a deplorable ſpectacle of equal vanity and miſery. Your grenadiers ſhed their blood with as much intrepidity as the moſt noble among them, without rating it at ſo high a price. Such a denomination, moreover, in our republic would give offence to the other orders of the ſtate. Our citizens are all equal; the only diſtinctions we know are thoſe which naturally ariſe among men from their virtue, their genius, and induſtry†.

" Beſides

* I am much inclined to believe that ſovereigns are almoſt always the moſt honeſt men in their courts. The ſoul of Narciſſus was ſtill more foul than that of Nero.

† Why cannot the French ſuffer a republican government? Who in this kingdom is ignorant of the pre-eminence of the nobleſſe, founded on the inſtitution itſelf, and confirmed by the cuſtom of many ages? Yet when under the reign of John, the third eſtate roſe from their abject condition, they took their ſeat in the aſſembly of the nation; that haughty and barbarous nobleſſe beheld it without commotion, aſſociate with the orders of the kingdom, though the times were ſtill filled with prejudices of the police of the fiefs, and the profeſſion of arms. The honour of the French nation, a principle ever active, and ſuperior to the

"Beſides all thoſe ramparts, thoſe barriers, and precautions uſed to prevent the monarch from forgetting, in time of public calamities, what he owes to the poor, he obſerves every year a ſolemn faſt, which continues for three days, during which time he ſuffers continual hunger and thirſt, and ſleeps upon the ground. This ſevere and ſalutary faſt imprints on his heart the moſt tender commiſeration towards the neceſſitous. Our ſovereign, it is true, has no need of this penance to remind him; but it is a law of the ſtate, a ſacred law, conſtantly followed and reſpected. By the example of our monarch, every man who has any connection with government, makes it his duty to feel what is want; and is from thence more diſpoſed to aſſiſt thoſe who are obliged to ſubmit to the imperious and cruel law of extreme neceſſity*."

But

wiſeſt inſtitutions, may therefore one day become the ſoul of a republic; eſpecially when a taſte for philoſophy, a knowledge of political laws, and the experience of ſo many evils, ſhall have deſtroyed that levity, that indiſcretion which blaſts thoſe brilliant qualities that would make the French the firſt people in the univerſe; if they would well conſider, ripen, and ſupport their projects.

* In the front of a philoſopher's hermitage there was a rich and lofty mountain, favoured with the moſt benign regards of the ſun. It was covered with beautiful paſtures, with golden grain, with cedars and aromatic plants. Birds, the moſt pleaſing to the ſight, and delicious to the taſte, fanned the air in flocks with their wings, and filled it with their harmonious warblings. The bounding deer peopled the

But, I ſaid that theſe changes muſt have been long, laborious, and difficult. What efforts you muſt have made!—The philoſopher with a pleaſing ſmile, replied, " Good is not more difficult than evil. The human paſſions are frightful obſtacles; but when the mind is once convinced of its true intereſt, the man becomes juſt and faithful. It ſeems to me that a ſingle perſon might govern the world, if the hearts of men were diſpoſed to toleration and equity. Notwithſtanding the common inconſequence of thoſe of your

the woods. Some genial lakes produced in their ſilver waters the trout, the perch, and dace. Three hundred familes were ſpread over this mountain, and there found a bleſt abode, in the midſt of peace and plenty, and in the boſom of thoſe virtues they conſtantly practiſed: each morn and eve they ſent their grateful thanks to heaven. But behold the indolent and voluptuous Oſman mounts the throne, and all theſe families are preſently ruined, driven from their abodes, and become vagabonds upon the earth. The beauteous mountain was ſeized by his vizier, a noble robber, who feaſted his dogs, his concubines, and his flatterers with the plunder of the unhappy people. Oſman one day loſing himſelf in the chace, met the philoſopher, whoſe hut had eſcaped that torrent which had ſwept all elſe before it. The philoſopher recollected the monarch, without his ſuſpecting it: he treated him with a noble courteſy. They talked of the preſent times.—" Alas! ſaid the ſage old man, we knew what pleaſure was ſome ten years ſince; but now all ſuffers; extreme poverty has drove the poor from their habitations; wrings their ſouls, and each day ſees them go drooping to the grave, oppreſſed by extreme miſery."—" Pray tell me, ſaid the monarch, what is that miſery?" The philoſopher ſighed, remained ſilent, and ſet the prince in the way to his palace.

your age, it was foreſeen that reaſon would one day make a great progreſs; its effects have become viſible, and the happy principles of a wiſe government have been the firſt fruits of its reformation."

CHAP. XXXVII.

THE HEIR TO THE THRONE.

MORE inquiſitive than was ever the bailiff of Huron*, I continued to exerciſe the patience of my companions. I have ſeen the monarch on his throne, but I forgot to aſk, Gentlemen, where was the king's ſon; whom in my time they called the dauphin. One of the moſt polite among them replied:

"As we are convinced that it is on the education of the great that depends the happineſs of the people, and that virtue is learned as vice is communicated, we watch with the greateſt aſſiduity over the early years of our princes. The heir to the throne is not at court, where ſome flatterers would dare to perſuade him that he is ſomething more than other men, and that they are leſs than inſects. His high deſtiny is

* The Huron, or the Candid Man, a romance by Voltaire, and one of the beſt his pen has produced. The Huron confined in the Baſtile with a Janſeniſt, is of all things in the world the moſt happily imagined.

is carefully concealed from him. When he is born, a royal mark is imprinted on his shoulder, by which he is afterwards known. He is placed in the hands of those whose discreet fidelity has been as well proved as their probity. They take a solemn oath before the Supreme Being never to reveal to the prince that he is one day to be king: a tremendous oath, and which they never dare to violate.

"As soon as he comes out of the hands of the women he is inured to exercise; and regard is had to his natural education, which should always precede the moral. He is cloathed like the son of a common peasant; he is accustomed to the plainest meats; and is early taught sobriety; he will be the better able hereafter to teach œconomy by his own example, and to know that a false prodigality ruins a state, and dishonours those that promote it. He travels, successively through all the provinces; they explain to him the various labours of the husbandman, the different manufactures, and the productions of the several soils; he sees all things with his own eyes; he enters the hut of the ploughman, eats at his table, assists in his labours, and learns to respect him. He converses freely with every man he meets; his character is suffered to display itself freely, while he thinks himself as far distant from the throne as he is near to it.

"Many kings have become tyrants, not because they had bad hearts, but because they never knew the

real

real ſtate of the common people of their country*. If we were to abandon a young prince to the flattering idea of a certain power, perhaps even with a virtuous mind, conſidering the unhappy diſpoſition of the human heart, he would at laſt endeavour to extend the limits of his authority†. For in that it is that many princes unhappily make the royal grandeur to conſiſt; and conſequently their intereſt is always at variance with that of the people.

" When the prince has attained the age of twenty years, or ſooner, if his mind appears to be early formed, he is conducted to the hall of audience; he mixes with the crowd as a common ſpectator; all the orders of the ſtate are then preſent, and all have received their inſtructions. On a ſudden the king riſes,

* Prejudice conſtantly attends the throne, ready to pour its errors into the ears of kings. Timorous Truth is in doubt of obtaining a victory over them, and waits for the ſignal to approach; but ſhe ſpeaks ſo ſtrange a language, that they turn to thoſe deceitful phantoms that are maſters of the common dialect. Kings! learn the ſevere philoſophic language of truth! It is in vain that you ſeek her, if you underſtand her not.

† Men have a natural diſpoſition to arbitrary power, as nothing is more convenient than to be obeyed by merely moving the tongue. Every one has heard of that ſultan who commanded his attendants to amuſe him with entertaining ſtories, on pain of being ſtrangled. Other monarchs hold pretty much the ſame language, when they ſay to the people, Divert me, and die with hunger.

riſes, and calls the young man three times by his name; the crowds of people open; aſtoniſhed, he advances with timid ſteps toward the throne, and trembling mounts the ſteps; the king embraces him, and declares him in the ſight of all the people to be his ſon. "Heaven," he ſays with an affecting and majeſtic voice, "Heaven has deſtined thee to bear the "burden of royalty; we have laboured for twenty "years to render thee worthy of it; do not fruſtrate "the hopes of this great people that you ſee before "you. My ſon, I expect from you the ſame zeal that "I have ſhown for this nation." What a criſis! what a crowd of ideas preſs upon his mind! The monarch then ſhows him the tomb where reſts the preceding king; that tomb on which is engraved in large characters, ETERNITY. He proceeds with the ſame awful voice; "My ſon, all has been done "for this moment. You now ſtand on the aſhes of "your grandfather; in you he is to revive; ſwear "to be juſt as he was. I ſhall ſoon deſcend to ſupply "his place; but remember that I ſhall accuſe you "from this tomb if you abuſe your power. Ah! "my dear ſon, the eyes of the Almighty and of this "nation are upon you; no one thought can be con-"cealed. If any incitements to ambition or pride "reign at this moment in your heart, there is yet "time to avoid their effects; renounce the diadem, "deſcend from the throne, and mix again with the "people; you will be greater and more reſpectable "as a common citizen, than as a vain and daſtardly "monarch. Let not the chimera of authority flat-"ter your young heart, but the great and pleaſing

"idea

" idea of being really uſeful to mankind; I promiſe " you for recompence the love of this people that " ſurrounds us; of my affection, the eſteem of the " world, and the aſſiſtance of the Monarch of the " univerſe; it is he that is King, my ſon, we are only " his agents, that are ſent upon the earth to accom- " pliſh his great deſigns*."

" The young prince is ſurpriſed and affected, his viſage is covered with a modeſt ſhame; he dares not look upon that great aſſembly, whoſe regards are eagerly fixed on him. His tears begin to flow; he weeps at the proſpect of his extenſive duties; but ſoon an heroic ſpirit poſſeſſes him; he is taught that a great man ought to ſacrifice himſelf for the good of mankind; and that as nature has not prepared for man a happineſs without allay, it is by that benign power which the nation has depoſited with him, that he is enabled to do that for them which nature has refuſed. That noble idea penetrates, animates, inflames him; the oaths are adminiſtered to him by his father; he calls the ſacred aſhes of his grandfather to witneſs his ſincerity; he adores the Supreme Being;

* Garnier cauſes it to be ſaid to Nabuchedonoſer, puffed up with his power and his victories, " Who is that God who commands the rain, the winds and the tempeſts? Over whom reigns he? Over the ſeas, the rocks, &c." To which he replies, " Inſenſible ſubjects! I command over men; I am the only God of this earth where we dwell.

Inſenſibles ſujets! moi je commande aux hommes;
Je ſuis l' unique Dieu de la terre ou nous ſommes.

ing; he is crowned. The orders of the ſtate ſalute him, and the people with tranſports of joy cry out, "O thou that art taken from amongſt us, whom "we have ſo long and ſo nearly beheld, may the pre-"ſtiges of greatneſs never make thee forget who thou "art, and who we are*."

"He cannot mount the throne, till the age of two and twenty; for it is repugnant to common ſenſe, that a nation ſhould be governed by an infant king. For a like reaſon the king lays down the ſceptre at the age of ſeventy years, becauſe the art of governing requires an activity of body, and a certain ſenſibility, which unlucky age extinguiſhes in the human mind†. Beſide, we are fearful leſt habit ſhould produce in his mind that concentrated ambition they call avarice, which is the laſt and moſt rueful paſſion that

* The Greeks and Romans experienced ſenſations far more poignant than ours. A religion altogether ſenſible; thoſe frequent occurrences that concerned the grand intereſt of the republic; a ſtate dignity that was awful without being faſtuous; the acclamations of the people; the aſſemblies of the nation, and the public harangues; what an inexhauſtible ſource of pleaſures! When compared with thoſe people, we ſeem but to languiſh, or ſcarce to exiſt.

† How pleaſing is it when years have whitened our heads, to be able to retire, and reflect on thoſe acts of humanity and beneficence that we have performed in the courſe of our days! Of all that we now are there will then nought remain but the ſenſation of having been virtuous, or the ſhame and torment of vice.

that man has to encounter*. The inheritance is in the line direct, and the septuagenary monarch still serves the state by his councils, or by the example of his past virtues. The time between the public acknowledgment of the prince, and the day of his majority, is still subject to new proofs. They constantly talk to him by strong and sensible images. If they would prove, that kings are not otherwise formed than common men; that they have not a hair more on their heads; that they are equally weak at their entrance into this world; equal in infirmities, and equal in the sight of God, and that the suffrage of the people is the sole basis of their grandeur; they introduce by way of diversion, a young porter of his size and age, and they wrestle together; though the king's son be vigorous, he is commonly overcome; the other continues the attack till the prince is forced to own the defeat. They raise him up, and say to him, "You see that no man by the law of nature ought to submit to another, that no man is born a slave; that monarchs are born men, and not kings; in a word, that the human race were not created for the pleasure of some particular families. That even the Almighty, according to the natural law, would not govern by force, but over the free-will. To endeavour therefore to make men slaves, is to act with temerity

* Prodigality is equally to be feared. A young prince will sometimes refuse, because he has that in him which may atone for refusal; but the old man constantly consents, because he has nothing to supply the vacuity of the want of liberality.

temerity toward the ſupreme Being, and to exerciſe tyranny over the race of mankind." The young man who had conquered, then bows before him, and ſays, "I may be ſtronger than you, but there is "neither right nor glory in that; true ſtrength is "equity, and true glory greatneſs of mind. I render "you homage as my ſovereign, and the depoſitory "of the force of every individual; when any one "would tyrannize over me, it is to you I muſt fly "for ſuccour; you will then hear and ſave me from "the unjuſt and powerful." . . . .

"If the young prince commits any remarkable fault or imprudence, the next day he ſees it in the public papers*; he is ſometimes aſtoniſhed and offended. They anſwer him coolly, "It is a faith-"ful and vigilant tribunal, that records each day the "actions of princes. Poſterity will know and judge "all that you have ſaid and done; it depends on "yourſelf to make them ſpeak honourably of you." If the young prince reflect, and acknowledge his fault, then the papers of the next day declare that token of a happy character, and give to the noble action all the eulogy it deſerves†.

"But

* I could wiſh that a prince had ſometimes the curioſity to know what the people think of him; he would learn enough in a quarter of an hour to afford him matter of reflection all the reſt of his life.

† You ſay, "I fear not the ſword of man. I am brave." But you deceive yourſelf. To be truly brave you muſt

" But what they moſt ſtrongly recommend, and impreſs on him by multiplied images, is a horror of that vain pageantry, which has deſtroyed ſo many ſtates, and diſhonoured ſo many ſovereigns*. Thoſe gilded palaces, ſay they, are like the decorations of a theatre, where paper appears to be maſſy gold. The child imagines that it beholds a real palace. Be not a child. Pomp and oſtentation are abuſes, introduced by pride and policy. They diſplay that parade to inſpire the greater reſpect and fear. By that means the ſubject contracts a ſervile diſpoſition, and becomes accuſtomed to the yoke. But is a king ever debaſed by putting himſelf on a level with his ſubjects? What are thoſe inceſſant empty ſhews, in compariſon with that open and affable manner that attracts the affections of all the people to his perſon? The wants of a monarch are not leſs than thoſe of the meaneſt of his ſubjects. There is no difference between his ſtomach and that of a clown, ſays J. J. Rouſſeau. If he would taſte the pureſt of all pleaſures, let him taſte that of being beloved, and let him render himſelf worthy of it†.

" To

fear neither their tongues nor their pens. But in this caſe, the greateſt kings of the earth have ever been the greateſt poltroons. The Gazette of Amſterdam prevented Louis XIV. from ſleeping.

* That luxury, which is the cauſe of the deſtruction of ſtates, and that tramples under foot every virtue, takes its ſource from corrupted hearts, and which all others copy after.

† Duke *** of Wirtemberg, the firſt of that name, was dining with a ſovereign prince, his neighbour, and ſome othe

"To conclude: there paſſes no day on which he is not reminded of the exiſtence of a ſupreme Being, whoſe eye conſtantly ſurveys this world; of the duty that he owes him, of a reverence for his providence, and a confidence in his infinite wiſdom. The moſt horrid of all beings is without doubt an atheiſtical king: I had far rather be in a veſſel toſſed by the tempeſt, and directed by a drunken pilot; I ſhould at leaſt have a chance to be ſaved.

"It is not till the age of twenty-two that he is permitted to marry. He takes a native of our country to his throne. He does not ſend in queſt of a foreign wife, who frequently brings from her country a diſpoſition, which being widely different from the manners of our nation, baſtardizes the blood of France, and cauſes us to be governed by Spaniards or Italians, rather than by the deſcendants of our brave anceſtors. Our king does not offer that inſult to a whole nation, to imagine that beauty and virtue are to be found in a foreign ſoil only. She who, in the courſe of his journeys, has touched his heart, and has loved him without a diadem, mounts the throne with

other petty potentates, each of whom was talking of his forces and power. After hearing all their pretenſions, the Duke ſaid, "I do not envy any one of you that power which God has given you, but there is one thing of which I can boaſt, which is, that in my little ſtate I can walk at all hours alone, and in ſecurity. I ramble among the woods, I lay me down to ſleep under ſome tree, quite unconcerned, for I fear neither the ſword of a robber, nor of an injured ſubject.

with her lover, and becomes dear and reſpectable to the nation, as well from her own virtues, as for having been able to pleaſe a hero. Beſide the advantage of inſpiring all the young women with a love of wiſdom and virtue, by ſetting before them a recompence worthy of their efforts, we hereby avoid all thoſe family wars, that are abſolutely foreign to the intereſt of the ſtate, and that have ſo often deſolated Europe*.

" On the day of his marriage, inſtead of fooliſhly ſquandering money in pompous and tireſome feaſts, in ſenſeleſs and guady ſhews, in fire-works, and other expences equally extravagant and diſguſtful, the prince erects ſome public monument, as a bridge, an aqueduct, a public road, a canal, or a theatre. This monument bears his name. We remember his benefaction, while thoſe irrational profuſions are forgot, or only remembered by the horrid accidents they occaſioned†. The people, ſatisfied with the generoſity

* Moſt of our wars have proceeded, as every one knows, from thoſe alliances that are pretended to be political. If indeed Europe and Africa could eſpouſe Aſia and America, well and good.

† Shall I here recall the horrible night of the 30th of March, 1770? It will eternally accuſe our police, that is favourable to the rich alone, and that protects the barbarous luxury of carriages¶. It was by them that horrid diſaſter was

¶ Carriages are far more dangerous in Paris than London, as they drive much faſter, and there is no ſeparate path for foot paſſengers.

rosity of their prince, are under no temptation to whisper to each other that ancient fable, in which the poor frog laments in his marsh the sight of the nuptials of the sun*.

CHAP.

was occasioned. But if this dreadful accident has produced no strict ordinance by which the citizens may walk the streets without danger, what are we to expect of other evils that are more deeply rooted, and more difficult to remedy? Near eight hundred persons perished by being crowded together, and six weeks after it was not mentioned.

* I met, in a piece of poetry, with these verses:

Ces rois enorgueillis de leur grandeur suprême,
Ce sont des mendians que couvre un diadême.

"These puffed-up monarchs, with their mighty grandeur, are nothing more than beggars covered with a crown." In fact, they are craving incessantly: it is the people that pay for the robes of the pompous bride; for the feasts, the fire-works, the embroidery of the nuptial bed, &c. and when the royal babe is born, each one of its cries is metamorphosed into a new tax.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

THE WOMEN.

MY affable and polite inſtructor continued in the ſame free manner.—"You ſhould know that our women have no other portion than their virtue and their charms; they are, therefore, intereſted in improving their moral faculties. By this ſtroke of legiſlation we have deſtroyed the hydra, Coquetry, ſo fruitful of contention, of vices and ridicule.—" How! no portion? the women bring nothing with them? and who will marry them?—"Women have no portion, becauſe they are by nature dependant on that ſex from whom they derive their ſtrength and glory, and that nothing may with-hold them from that legitimate empire, which is conſtantly leſs terrible than the yoke they give themſelves in their fatal liberty. Beſides, the conſequence is the ſame; a man who marries a wife without any fortune, is enabled to diſpoſe of his daughters without emptying his purſe. We never ſee a girl proud of her fortune, who ſeems to do her huſband a favour by accepting him*. Every man is bound to provide for his wife; and

* An Athenian lady aſked a Lacedemonian, what portion ſhe brought her huſband? "Chaſtity," ſhe replied¶.

¶ It is no uncommon thing for a modern lady to bring her huſband this portion, though ſhe may chance to diſpoſe of it afterwards for her own private emolument.

and ſhe, depending entirely on her huſband, is the better diſpoſed to fidelity and obedience. The law being univerſal, no one can complain. The women have no other diſtinction than what is reflected on them by their huſbands. Conſtantly ſubmiſſive to the duties that their ſex requires, their honour is to obſerve the ſtrict laws that reſult from them, by which alone they can ſecure their happineſs.

"Every citizen that has not defamed himſelf, though he ſhould be of the loweſt claſs, may claim a daughter of the higheſt, provided ſhe conſent, and there be no ſeduction or diſproportion of age. Every one reſumes the primitive equality of nature in forming a contract ſo pure, ſo free, and ſo neceſſary to our happineſs, as is that of matrimony. There ends the bounds of paternal power*, and that of civil authority. Our marriages are fortunate, becauſe intereſt, which corrupts all things, does not

ſoil

* How indecent, how monſtrous is it, to ſee a father appeal to twenty tribunals, animated by a barbarous pride that will not let him give his daughter to a man, becauſe he had ſecretly deſtined her for another. He dares, in this caſe, to cite civil ordinances, while he forgets the moſt ſacred laws of nature, which forbids him to oppreſs an unfortunate daughter, over whom he has no legitimate authority, but what may conduce to her happineſs. It is a remarkable and melancholy circumſtance, that in this age the number of bad parents has exceeded that of unnatural children. Where is the ſource of this evil? Alas! in our laws.

ſoil their amiable bands. You cannot eaſily imagine how many vices and foibles, ſuch as ſlander, jealouſy, idleneſs, the pride of excelling a rival, crimes of every kind, have been baniſhed by this ſimple law *. Women, inſtead of exerciſing their vanity, have cultivated their minds; and in lieu of riches, have furniſhed themſelves with gentleneſs, modeſty, and patience. Muſic and dancing no longer form their principal accompliſhments; they have vouchſafed to learn the arts of œconomy, of pleaſing their huſbands, and educating their children. That extreme inequality of rank and fortune, the moſt deſtructive vice in every political ſociety, is here no longer ſeen; the meaneſt citizen has no reaſon to bluſh at his condition; he aſſociates with the higheſt, who diſdains not his connection. The law has equalled mankind to the greateſt degree in its power; inſtead of creating thoſe injurious diſtinctions, that produce nothing but pride on one ſide, and hatred on the other, it has been ſolicitous to deſtroy all thoſe obſtacles that might divide the children of the ſame mother.

" Our wives are, what were thoſe of the ancient Gauls, ſincere and amiable companions whom we reſpect and conſult on all occaſions. They do not affect that miſerable jargon ſo much in vogue among you

* Nature has deſtined women to domeſtic employments, and to cares every where of the ſame kind. They have much leſs variety in their characters than have men; almoſt all women reſemble each other; they have but one end, and which they maniteſt in every country by ſimilar effects.

you, and which they called wit*. They do not buſy themſelves with aſſigning the rank due to the ſeveral ſorts of genius; they are content with good ſenſe, a qualification far preferable to thoſe artificial flaſhes that are the wretched amuſements of idleneſs. Love, the fruitful ſource of the moſt excellent virtues, preſides over, and guards the intereſt of our country. The more happineſs we enjoy in her boſom, the more dear ſhe becomes. Judge then what is our attachment to her. The women, doubtleſs, make a part of this felicity. Inſtead of thoſe empty and faſtidious pleaſures, which they purſued from vanity, they now enjoy all our tenderneſs and eſteem, and find a felicity more ſolid and more pure in the poſſeſſion of our hearts, than in thoſe tranſient pleaſures, whoſe very purſuit was attended with anxiety. Charged with the care of ſuperintending the firſt years of our children, they have no other preceptors; for being more ſagacious and vigilant than they were in your days, they are more ſenſible of the delicious pleaſure of being mothers in the full extent of the term."

But, I ſaid, notwithſtanding all your improvements, man is ſtill man, liable to weakneſs, humour, and diſguſt.

* A woman ſhews very little diſcretion, who is deſirous of ſhewing her wit upon every occaſion. She ought, on the contrary, to uſe all her art to conceal it. In fact, what is it we men look after? Innocence, candour, ſimplicity, truth, an intereſting timidity. A woman that diſplays her wit ſeems to ſay to you, "Sir, addreſs yourſelf to me; I am a woman of wit; I ſhall be more perfidious, perverſe, and artful than another."

diſguſt. If Diſcord, with her torch, ſhould take the place of Hymen, what do you then? Are divorces permitted*?—"Doubtleſs, when they are founded on

* Nicholas I. erecting himſelf into the reformer of the laws divine, natural, and civil, abrogated divorces in the ninth century. They were then in uſe among all the people of the earth, authoriſed by Jews and Chriſtians. How ſtrange is the lot of human kind? One man alone has deprived them of a precious liberty; of a civil contract has made a ſacred indiſſoluble chain, and for ever fomented domeſtic variance. Many paſt ages have given to that fooliſh and whimſical law an inviolable ſanction; and thoſe inteſtine wars that diſtract the domeſtic œconomy and promote the depopulation of ſtates, are the fruits of the caprice of a pontiff. It is evident, that were divorces permitted, marriages would be more happy¶. We ſhould be leſs fearful of forming a contract, when we knew that it could not bind us to miſery. The wife would be more attentive and ſubmiſſive. The durability of the band depending on the will of the parties bound, would become more ſtrong. Population, moreover, being far below its true ſtandard, it is to the

¶ There are no divorces permitted in France, not even in caſe of the moſt flagrant adultery. "They," ſays the lordly prieſt, "whom God," that is, I and my church, "has put to-"gether, no man can put aſunder." The only reſource for the huſband is to petition the king; and if, by great chance, he have intereſt ſufficient, the wife is ſent to a convent; where ſhe will paſs her time diſagreeably enough, if ſhe be not able to bribe the Cerberus at the door, which they ſay, is not unfrequently done. I remember a lady of the firſt quality, who was ſent to a monaſtery, and early the next morning, the good abbeſs came to her bed-ſide, and gave her a long lecture on the ſubject of incontinence.—The gallant all the while lay ſnug under the bed clothes.

on legitimate reaſons; as when both parties, for example, ſolicit a divorce at the ſame time; an incompatibility of humours is ſufficient to diſſolve the band. People marry only to be happy. It is a contract of which peace and mutual regard ſhould be the end. We are not ſo ſenſeleſs as to force two people to live together, whoſe hearts are eſtranged from each other, and thereby to renew the puniſhment of the cruel Mezentius, who faſtened a living body to a loathſome carcaſe. A divorce is the only eligible remedy, as it at leaſt renders to ſociety two perſons that are loſt by their connection with each other. But (would you believe it?) the greater the facility is, the more averſe they are to profit by it, as there is a ſort of diſhonour in not being able to bear together the troubles of a tranſient life. Our women, virtuous by principle, are delighted with domeſtic pleaſures. We are always happy when our duty coincides with our deſires; nothing is then difficult, all things bear a pleaſing aſpect."

O how

the indiſſolubility of marriages that we ought to attribute the ſecret cauſe of that evil which undermines the catholic monarchies. If it ſhould be tolerated for any conſiderable time longer, and celibacy ſhould continue to prevail among them, (the fruit of a wretched adminiſtration) together with the eccleſiaſtic celibacy which ſeems to be of right divine, they will have none but enervated troops to oppoſe the numerous, healthful, and robuſt armies of thoſe people who permit divorces. The fewer ſingle people there are in a ſtate, the more chaſte, happy, and fruitful marriages will be. The diminution of the human race neceſſarily tends to the total ruin of an empire.

O how unfortunate I am to be ſo old! I exclaimed; I would immediately marry one of theſe amiable women. Ours were ſo haughty and inſolent, and, for the moſt part ſo faithleſs, ſo badly educated, that marriage was regarded as an egregious folly. Coquetry, with an immoderate love of pleaſure, and an abſolute unconcern for every thing but themſelves, compoſed the character of a woman of my time. They derided all ſort of ſenſibility, and had ſcarce any humanity but towards their gallants. Every taſte but that of luxury was in a manner a ſtranger to their minds. I ſpeak not of modeſty, for that was eſteemed ridiculous. Therefore, a prudent man being to chooſe of two evils, preferred celibacy as the leaſt. The difficulty of bringing a child up, was an argument not leſs ſtrong. Men avoided giving children to a ſtate that would load them with diſtreſs. So the generous elephant, once made captive, refuſes to indulge himſelf in the moſt pleaſing inſtinct, that he may not entail ſlavery on his poſterity. The huſband himſelf, in the midſt of his anxiety, watched an opportunity of getting rid of a child, as we endeavour to drive away a voracious animal. Human beings fled from each other, as their union neceſſarily redoubled their miſery; the wretched virgins, fixed to the ſoil where they were born, languiſhed like flowers, that, ſcorched by the ſun, turn pale, and drop from their ſtalks; the greater part carried with them, even to the grave, the deſire of being wives; diſguſt and anxiety embittered every moment of their days; and they could not procure any atonement for that privation, but by the riſk of their honour, and the

loſs

loſs of their health. In ſhort, the number of ſingle perſons was become frightfully great; and, to complete the miſery, reaſon ſeemed to juſtify that outrage to humanity*. But proceed, that you may comfort me by deſcribing a pleaſing picture of your manners? How were you able, to drive away that plague, which threatened to devour the human race?

My guide raiſed his voice, and, with an animated dignity, ſaid, lifting his eyes to heaven, "O God, if man is unhappy, it is by his own fault; it is becauſe he ſhuns ſociety, and confines all his cares to himſelf. Our induſtry is conſumed on futile objects; and thoſe that would enrich us we neglect. By forming man for ſociety, Providence has placed by our misfortunes thoſe aids that are deſtined to relieve them. What ſtronger obligation is there than mutually to aſſiſt each other? Is it not the general deſire of mankind? Why then does he ſo frequently miſtake his intereſt?

"I repeat

* A taſte for celibacy will begin to prevail when a government is become as bad as it poſſibly can be. The citizen detached from the moſt pleaſing connection, will inſenſibly detach himſelf from the love of life itſelf; ſuicide will be frequent; the art of living will become ſo painful, that exiſtence itſelf will be a burden. Men can bear all the phyſical evils united; but the political evils are a hundred times more horrible, becauſe they are not neceſſary. Man curſes that ſociety which ought to alleviate his pains and break his fetters. They reckoned at Paris, in the year 1769, one hundred and forty-ſeven perſons who put an end to their own lives.

" I repeat it; our women are wives and mothers; and from thoſe two virtues all others are derived. They would diſhonour themſelves, were they to daub their faces with paint, or ſtuff their heads with ſnuff, or debauch their ſtomach with drams; if they were to ſit up all night, or ſing licentious ſongs, or practiſe the leaſt indecency with men. They have more certain attractions; gentleneſs, modeſty, the native graces, and that noble decency, which are their inheritance, and their true glory *.

" They ſuckle their own children without thinking it a labour; and as it is done without affectation, their milk is pure and plentiful. The body of the child is early invigorated; he is taught to ſwim, to hurl, and to carry burdens. The bodily education appears to us of importance; we form his conſtitution before we exerciſe his mind, which ſhould not be that of a parrot, but that of a man.

" His mother watches over the morning of his riſing thoughts; ſhe reflects on the method to be purſued in forming his mind to virtue; how ſhe ſhall turn his ſenſibility into humanity, his pride into greatneſs of ſoul, and his curioſity into a knowledge of ſublime truths. She meditates on thoſe engaging fables ſhe ſhall uſe, not to conceal the truth, but to render

* While the women govern in France, while all things are made to conform to their taſte, while they judge of the genius and merit of men, the French will never have that ſtability, that ſage œconomy, that gravity, nor that nervous character which becomes free men.

render it more amiable; that its luſtre may not dazzle the weakneſs of his inexperienced mind; ſhe carefully weighs all her words and actions, that no one of them may make a bad impreſſion on his heart. Thus ſhe preſerves him from that breath of vice, by which the flower of innocence is ſo ſuddenly withered.

"Education differs among us according to the ſtation the child is hereafter to hold in ſociety; for though we are delivered from the yoke of pedantry, it would be ſtill ridiculous to teach him what he muſt hereafter forget. Each art is unfathomable, and to excel in it requires our whole attention. The mind of man, notwithſtanding all thoſe aids recently diſcovered, miracles apart, is not able to embrace more than one object; it is ſufficient for him to attach himſelf ſtrongly to that, without attempting excurſions that cannot but diſtract him. It was the ridicule of your age to endeavour to be univerſal; we regard it as a madneſs.

"In a more advanced age, when his mind is able to diſtinguiſh thoſe connections by which he is united to ſociety, then inſtead of that futile knowledge with which the minds of youth are indiſcriminately loaded, his mother with that natural and tender eloquence peculiar to women, teaches him what are manners, decency, virtue. She makes choice of that ſeaſon, when nature, dreſſed in all her ſplendor, ſpeaks to the moſt inſenſible heart, when the genial breath of ſpring has decorated the groves, the fields, and

foreſts, with all their ornaments. "My ſon," ſhe ſays, preſſing him to her maternal boſom*, "behold "theſe verdant fields, theſe trees adorned with ſpread- "ing branches; it is not long ſince, that, deprived of "all their ornaments, they were congealed by that "cold which pierces the inward parts of the earth; "but there is a gracious Being, who is our common "Parent, and who never abandons his children; he "dwells in heaven, and from thence beholds, with "the kindneſs of a father, all his creatures. At the "moment that he ſmiles, the ſun darts its rays, the "trees flouriſh, the earth is crowned with flowers, "and with herbs for the nouriſhment of thoſe beaſts "whoſe milk we drink. And why do we ſo love "the Lord? Hear, O my child! it is becauſe he is "powerful and good; all that you ſee is the work of "his hands, and all this is nothing to what is con- "cealed from you. Eternity, for which every im- "mortal ſoul was created, will afford thee an end- "leſs proceſſion of joy and wonder. His power and "goodneſs know no bounds; he loves us, becauſe "we are his children; from day to day he will ſhow "us greater kindneſs, if we are virtuous, that is, if "we obey his laws. O! my ſon, how can we but adore "and bleſs his name!" At theſe words, the mother and the child fall proſtrate, and their united prayers aſcend together to the throne of the Almighty.

"It

* Cebes repreſents impoſture as ſitting at the gate that leads to life, and obliging all who preſent themſelves to drink of the cup of error. That cup is ſuperſtition. Happy are they who only taſte it, and then throw the veſſel away.

" It is thus that ſhe poſſeſſes him with the idea of a God, that ſhe nouriſhes his ſoul with the milk of of truth, and that ſhe ſays to herſelf, " I will fulfil " the will of the Creator who has committed him to " my care. I will be ſevere to thoſe baneful paſſions " that may injure his happineſs; to the tenderneſs " of a mother I will unite the unwearied vigilance of " a friend."

" You have ſeen at what age he is initiated to the communion of the two infinities. Such is our education; it is, as you ſee, altogether ſentimental; we deteſt that jeering wit, which was the moſt terrible ſcourge of your age; it dried up, it burned all it touched; its buffooneries were the ſource of all your vices. But, if a frivolous diſpoſition be ſo dangerous, what is reaſon itſelf without ſentiment? A meagre frame, without colour, without grace, and almoſt without life. What are new, and even profound ideas, if they have nothing animating and affecting? What need have I of a cold truth that chills my blood? It loſes its force and its effect. It is in the heart that truth diſplays its charms and its power. We cheriſh that eloquence which abounds in lively and ſtriking pictures; it is that gives wings of fire to our thought; it ſees and ſtrikes the object; it becomes attached to it, becauſe the pleaſure of being affected is joined to that of being enlightened*.

" Our

* We reckon more on exterior manners, that is, upon cuſtom, than on any thing elſe, for which reaſon it is that we

"Our philoſophy, therefore, is not ſevere; and why ſhould it be ſo? Why not crown it with flowers? Are diſguſtful or mournful ideas more honourable to virtue than thoſe that are pleaſing and ſalutary? We think, that pleaſure, proceeding from a beneficent hand, is not ſent upon earth to make us ſhun its approach. Pleaſure is not a monſter; it is, as Young ſays, virtue under a gayer title. Far from endeavouring to deſtroy the paſſions, the inviſible movers of our being, we regard them as precious gifts that we ſhould carefully œconomiſe. Happy is the man endowed with ſtrong paſſions; they form his glory, his grandeur, and his opulence. A wiſe man among us cultivates his mind, diſcards his prejudices, and acquires uſeful and agreeable ſciences. All the arts that can extend his judgment and render it more diſcerning, are exerciſed and improved by his mind; that done, he attends to the voice of nature only,

we neglect education. The ancients treated each ſubject in a manner altogether ſentimental, and threw on the ſciences I know not what allurement, the ſecret of which is loſt to us. The genius of the moderns is conſtantly defective for want of ſentiment. The moſt happy talents are become callous under the ferule of pedantry. Is there in the world a more ridiculous inſtitution than that of our colleges, when we compare their dry and lifeleſs maxims with the public education the Greeks gave their youth, ornamenting wiſdom with all thoſe attractions which charm that tender age? Our preceptors appear like ſavage maſters; it is no wonder, therefore, that their diſciples are the firſt to avoid and fly from them.

only, ſubject to the law of reaſon, and reaſon directs him to happineſs*.

* The warmth of the paſſions is not the cauſe of our irregularities; the furious, ungovernable courſer, that runs away with the bad rider, that throws and tramples him under foot, is obedient to the bridle under the direction of a ſkilful maſter; and gains the prize in a glorious courſe. The weakneſs of paſſions diſcovers a poverty of nature. What, in fact, is that heavy, ſilent citizen, whoſe inſipid ſoul is void of all ſenſibility; who is peaceful, becauſe he is incapable of action; who vegetates, and ſuffers himſelf to be eaſily led by the magiſtrate, becauſe he has no deſires? Is he a man, or a ſtatue? Place by him a man full of lively ſentiments, who rides upon the impetuoſity of his paſſions. He tears off the veil from the ſciences; he will commit faults, and he will diſplay his genius. An enemy to repoſe, and thirſting after knowledge, he will draw from the commotions of the world a luminous and ſublime ſpirit that will enlighten his country; he will afford, perhaps, occaſion for cenſure; but he will have exerted all the energy of his ſoul; the ſpots in his character will diſappear, becauſe he will be greatly uſeful to mankind.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIX.

THE TAXES *.

TELL me, I beſeech you, how are your public taxes levied? for let the legiſlature be as perfect as it may, taxes, I think, muſt always be paid.

* My friends hear this apologue. Toward the beginning of the world there was a vaſt foreſt of citron trees, that bore the moſt beautiful, large and pleaſant fruit. The branches bent under their burthens, and the air far round was embalmed with their fragrant odour. The impetuous winds chanced to blow down ſeveral citrons, and to break ſome of the branches: certain travellers paſſing that way, quenched their thirſt with the juice of the fruit, and caſt away the rind. This accident induced the race of citron-trees to chooſe guardians, who were to drive away paſſengers, and to incloſe the foreſt with high walls, to oppoſe the fury of the winds. Theſe guardians appeared at firſt faithful and diſintereſted, but they ſoon found that ſuch hard labour produced a violent thirſt; they therefore made this propoſition to the citrons: "Gentlemen, we are ready to periſh by thirſt in labouring for you; permit us to make a ſmall inciſion in each of you, that we may have a drop of liquor to refreſh our parched throats; you will not be poorer, and we and our children ſhall thereby acquire freſh ſtrength for your ſervice."

The credulous citrons thought this requeſt not unreaſonable, and ſubmitted to the imperceptible contribution. But what was the conſequence? When the inciſion was once made, the hands of meſſieurs, the guardians, preſſed them

paid. As a full anſwer, the worthy man, my conductor took me by the hand, and led me to a ſpacious place, formed by the termination of four ſtreets. I obſerved a ſtrong cheſt that was twelve feet high; it was ſupported on four wheels; there was a ſmall opening at top, which was ſecured from the rain by a kind of awning; on this cheſt was wrote, *Tribute due to the King repreſenting the ſtate.* Hard by was another cheſt, of a ſmaller ſize, with theſe words; *Free gifts.* I ſaw ſeveral people, with eaſy, cheerful, contented looks, throw ſealed packets into the cheſt, as in our days they threw letters into the poſt-office. I was ſo aſtoniſhed at this eaſy manner of paying taxes, that I made a thouſand ridiculous inquiries; they therefore regarded me as a poor old man that was come from a far diſtant country; yet their indulgent affability would never ſuffer me to wait for a reply. I confeſs that it is only in a dream a man can

them every day more cloſely. They at laſt found that citron juice was neceſſary in all their food; they obſerved too that the cloſer they preſſed the fruit, the more juice it yielded. The citrons ſeeing themſelves thus profuſely bled, thought to have reduced their contribution to the primitive ſtipulation; but the guardians, grown more ſtrong, diſregarding all their complaint, put them in the preſs; and when nothing elſe remained, they forced a juice from the rinds, by the aid of terrible machines. They at laſt bathed themſelves in the juice of citrons. The beautiful foreſt was ſoon deſpoiled; the race of citrons became extinct; and their tyrants, habituated to that refreſhing liquor, by their prodigality had totally deprived themſelves of it. They all fell ſick, and died of the putrid fever. Amen, ſo be it.

can expect to meet with people so extremely complaisant. O, what a loyal nation!

"That large coffer you see, they said, is our receiver-general of the finances. It is there that every citizen deposits his contribution for the support of the state. We are there obliged to deposit the fiftieth part of our annual income. He that has no property, or what is only just sufficient for his maintenance, is exempt*; for why should we take bread from

* Hear what the labourer, the inhabitant of the country, in short, the people, should say to their sovereigns. "We have raised you over us, we have engaged our lives and properties to support the splendor of your throne, and the security of your person. You have promised, in return, to procure us abundance, and to protect us from alarms. Who would have believed that, under your government, joy should have fled from us, and that our feasts should be turned into mourning; that fear and terror should have succeeded to a pleasing confidence! Formerly our verdant fields smiled upon us, and promised to repay our labours. Now the sweat of our brows produces fruit for strangers. Our villages, that once we were pleased with improving, now fall into ruins: our old men and children know not where to lay their heads. Our complaints are lost in the air, and each day a more cruel poverty succeeds to that we yesterday deplored. The appearance of humanity is scarce left us, and the animals that crop the grass are far less miserable.

The most heavy strokes have fell upon our heads. We are despised by the man in power, who will not allow us to have any sensation of honour; he comes to molest our

huts,

from him whose daily labour is but sufficient for his maintenance? In the other coffer are the voluntary offerings, intended for useful designs, for the execution

huts, and to seduce the innocence of our daughters: he snatches them from us, and they become a prey to brutal lust. In vain do we implore the aid of justice; justice turns from us, it is deaf to our cries, and only ready to assist them that oppress us.

The parade of magnificence insults our misery, and renders it still more insupportable. They drink our blood, and forbid us to complain. The hardened wretch, surrounded by an insolent luxury, prides himself on the works that our hands have erected. While he thirsts for gold, our industry is forgot; he regards us as slaves, because we are not riotous nor revengeful.

Those incessant wants that surround us have corrupted the purity of our manners: perfidy and rapine have crept in amongst us; for the necessities of life commonly overcome virtue. But who has given us examples of rapine? Who has extinguished in our hearts that source of candour which made us dear to each other? Who has caused our misery, the mother of our vices? Many of our inhabitants have refused to give existence to children that must be a prey to famine in the cradle. Others, in their despair, have blasphemed against Providence. Who are the real authors of all our crimes?

May our complaints pierce through that vapour by which thrones are surrounded! May kings rouse from their lethargy, and remember that they might have been born in our station, and that their children may one day descend to it! Attached to our country, or rather forming the most

tion of such projects as have been approved by the public. This sometimes is richer than the other; for we love liberality in our gifts, and no other motive is necessary to excite it than equity and a love for the state. Whenever our king sends forth an useful edict, that merits the public approbation, we run in crowds to the chest with our marks of acknowledgment; he has but to propose, and we furnish him

essential part of it, we do not wish to be exempt from contributing to its support. All we wish is a man of equity, who will estimate the degree of our force, and not crush us by a burden, which, if proportioned to our strength, we should bear with pleasure. Then tranquil and rich in our œconomy, contented with our lot, we should behold the grandeur of others without repining at our humble station.

More than the moiety of our days is already past. Our hearts are more than half delivered of their grief: we have but a little time to live. Our prayers are more for our country than for ourselves. It is we that support it: but if oppression shall continually increase, we must sink; our country will be overthrown, and by its fall it will crush our tyrants. We do not wish for this fruitless and rueful vengeance. What solace can the miseries of others afford us, when surrounded by the grave? We speak to you, O sovereigns! If you be yet men, if your hearts be not totally hardened, you will yet remember that we know how to die; and that the death by which we shall soon all be swallowed up, will one day be to you far more dreadful than to us.

This note is taken, in part, from a book intitled *Le Financier*.

him with the means of accomplishing every important project. There is a similar trunk in every quarter of the city, and in every city in the provinces, which receives the contributions of the country, that is, of the farmer at his ease, for the labourer, whose property is in his arms and his hands, pays nothing. The beef and the hogs are likewise exempt from that odious tax, which was first laid on the head of the Jews*, and which you paid without being sensible of your servile state."

How! I said, do you leave it to the good-will of the people to pay their taxes? there must be then a great number that pay nothing, without your knowing it.—"Not at all; your fears are vain. In the first place, we give with a free will; our tribute is not by compulsion, but founded on reason and equity. There is scarce a man amongst us who does not esteem it a point of honour to discharge the most sacred and most legitimate of all debts. Beside, if a man in condition to pay should dare to neglect it, you there see the table on which the name of the head of every family is engraved, by which we should soon see who had not thrown in his packet, on which should be his seal. In that case he covers himself with

* The Jews in France are at this day liable to pay a tax on entering a town, in the same manner as oxen and hogs; there seems something whimsical in connecting them with the last mentioned animals; it is however certainly far more infamous for a nation that pretends to humanity to impose a tax on any people on account of their religion, than it is for them to pay it when compelled.

with an eternal infamy, and we regard him as you regard a thief; the appellation of a bad citizen follows him to the grave.

"Examples of this sort are very rare, for the free gifts frequently amount to more than the tribute. We know that by giving a part to the ſtate, we render a benefit to ourſelves, and that if we would enjoy certain conveniencies, we muſt make a previous advance. But what are words, when we can teach by example? You ſhall preſently ſee much better than I can explain to you. It is to-day that there arrives from every part, the juſt tribute of a faithful people to a beneficent monarch, who conſiders himſelf merely as the depoſitory of the gifts they offer.

"Let us repair to the king's palace; the deputies of each province are by this time near arrived."—In fact, we had gone but a ſhort way before I ſaw men drawing ſmall cars, on which were placed cheſts covered with laurels. They broke the ſeals of thoſe coffers, and put them in the balance, by which, allowing for the weight of the cheſt, they found the juſt quantity of ſilver that each contained; and as all the payments were made in ſilver, they knew the exact produce of the whole, which was publicly declared by ſound of trumpet. After the general examination, an account in writing was fixed up for public inſpection, and by that each one knew the revenue of the ſtate. The money was then placed in the royal treaſury, under the care of the comptroller of the finances.

This

This was a day of rejoicing; they wore garlands of flowers, and cried, "Long live the king." They came in proceſſion before each car of tribute. The deputies of the ſeveral provinces ſaluted each other, and made reciprocal preſents. They drank to the health of the monarch by the ſound of cannon, which were anſwered by thoſe of the capitol, as expreſſing the thanks of the ſovereign. The whole people appeared on that day as one family. The king preſented himſelf in the midſt of this joyful people; he replied to the acclamations of his ſubjects by thoſe tender and affable regards, that inſpire confidence, and render love for love: he diſdained the art of treating politically with a people whom he regarded as his children. His viſits did not diſtreſs the citizens, as they coſt them nothing but cries of joy.*

the

* I once ſaw a prince make his public entry into a foreign city. The cannon proclaimed his approach. He was magnificently dreſſed, and drawn in a gilded car, loaded with pages and lacquies. The horſes neighed and bounded as if they had drawn the chariot of felicity. All the windows were thrown up, the roofs were covered, and the ſtreets crowded with the multitudes. The cavalry brandiſhed their ſabres, and the infantry exerciſed their muſkets. The air reſounded with the echo of the trumpets. The poet ſtrung his lyre, and the orator attended his deſcent from the chariot. The prince arrives; he is conducted to the palace, and his preſence inſpires an awful joy. I was at a window, and ſaw all that paſſed, which afforded me ſome ſingular reflections. Walking in the ſtreets a few days after, I was ſurpriſed to meet this prince on foot, alone, and in diſguiſe. No one took any notice of him, but treated him as a vulgar perſon. At that moment there arrived a mountebank,

the most brilliant and most flattering of all receptions. They did not desist from their labours, on the contrary, every citizen was proud of appearing before his king in the occupation he had embraced.

An intendant, invested with all the necessary marks of power, went into every province, received their petitions, examined himself the abuses, and bore directly to the foot of the throne the complaint of the subject. He visited indiscriminately every town, and where any abuse was abolished, they erected a pyramid in commemoration. What history more instructive than these moral monuments, which asserted that the sovereign really applied himself to the art of governing. These intendants set off and arrive incognito, they are perpetually disguised, and made their informations secretly; they are spies, but they act for the good of their country *.

But

seated in a sort of chaise, drawn by a number of large dogs, with a monkey for their postilion. The windows were all thrown up, the people shouted, and all their looks were fixed on the mountebank; the prince himself, attracted by the crowd, became one of his admirers. I looked attentively at him, and methought I heard him say to himself, "The empty acclamations of the multitude shall never more dazzle my mind with a foolish pride. It is not this man the people throng to see, but his strange equipage. It was not I that attracted their regards, but my valets, my horses, the richness of my dress, and the splendor of my gilded chariot."

* In Turkey, and at present in France, a governor is as much master as the most absolute monarch; it is that which causes

But your comptroller of the finances, I said, muſt be a man of wonderful integrity*. You remember the fable: the faithful dog, directed by temperance, carried his maſter's dinner, without ever offering to touch it, but freely to eat his part at laſt, when invited by example. Your officer muſt have a double virtue conſtantly to defend, and never dare to touch it! "Be aſſured he builds no palace or villa. He does not advance his diſtant couſins, or antient valets, to the firſt poſts in the government. He does not ſcatter his wealth as if all the revenue of the kingdom was at his diſpoſal†. Beſide, all thoſe in whoſe hands the public treaſure is depoſited cannot make uſe of money on any pretence whatever. It would be high treaſon to receive from them a ſingle piece of coin. They pay ſome particular expences by notes ſigned with the king's own hand. The ſtates pro-

cauſes the miſery of the people. This ſort of civil adminiſtration is of all others the moſt deplorable.

* Fouquet ſaid, "I have all the money, and the tariff of all the virtues in the kingdom."

† After the miniſters, the financiers, the monopoliſers, have ſacrificed their reputation for probity to a deſire of enriching themſelves; after they have ſubmitted to become odious, they do not even think of making a good uſe of their plunder; they endeavour to cover their original meanneſs under a pompous appearance. They intoxicate themſelves with diſſipations in order to drown the remembrance of what they have been, and what they have done, even this is not the greateſt evil, for by their oſtentatious wealth they corrupt thoſe who behold it with envy.

provide for all their expences; but they have not the least property*. They can neither buy, nor sell, nor hold. Their lodgings, their tables, their diversions, are all charged to the state. They enter a draper's shop, order such cloth as they want, and depart; the tradesman enters in his book, delivered such a day, to such a department of the state, so much; the state pays it: and so of every other profession. You will easily imagine, that if a comptroller of the finances has any modesty he will make a moderate use of this privilege; and if he should even abuse it, we shall still be gainers, compared with what the comptrollers cost you. We have likewise suppressed the registers, which served only to screen the robberies of the ministers, and to make them authorised by a method that may be called legitimate."

And who is your prime minister? "Can you ask it? The king himself. Can royalty be transferred†. The

* The inferior vices, that prepare the ruin of a state, are, that enormous dissipation of the public treasure; those extravagant gifts bestowed on subjects without merit; those salacious prodigalities unknown to the most lawless usurpers. We may observe in history, that the most subtle tyrants have been the most prodigal. I have somewhere read, that Augustus, the master of the world, maintained an army of 40 legions for 12 millions per annum. This surely affords matter for reflection.

† The general history of wars may be called, *The history of the private passions of ministers.* One of these, by his infamous negociations, sets a distant and tranquil empire in flames, merely to revenge some trifling offence he has personally received.

The general, the judge, the statesman, may then act by their proxies. In case of sickness, or when on a journey, or engaged in some particular business, if the monarch charges any one with the accomplishment of his orders, it is perhaps his friend only; there is no motive but that which can induce a man to charge himself voluntarily with such a burden; and our esteem alone gives him the momentary power. Animated and recompensed by friendship, he knows, like Sully and Amboise, how to speak the truth to his master, and the more faithfully to serve him, sometimes to oppose him. He combats his pollions. He loves the man while he has at heart the glory of the monarch*. By bearing part in his labours, he acquires a share of the veneration of his country, doubtless the most honourable inheritance he can leave his descendants, and that alone of which he is jealous."

When we talked of taxes, I forgot to ask, if you have periodical lotteries, where, in my time, the poor people depolited all their little hoards? "Certainly not. We do not so abuse the credulous hope of man; we do not levy on the indigent part of our people a tax

* Fidelity does not consist in that servile obedience to the will of another, which is represented by the emblem of a dog, who every where follows, continually flatters, and implicitly obeys the orders of an unjust or tyrannic master. It seems to me, that true fidelity is an exact observance of the laws of reason and justice, rather than a servile submission. Sully appears to me faithful when he tore the promise of marriage that Henry IV. had made.

tax ſo ingeniouſly cruel. The wretched, who weary of the preſent, lives on expectation only, carries the price of his labour and watchings to that fatal wheel, from whence he is in continual hope that Fortune will viſit him; but is conſtantly deluded by that cruel goddeſs. The urgent deſire of happineſs prevents him from reaſoning, and though the fraud be palpable, as the heart is dead to hope before life dies, every one imagines that at laſt he ſhall be ſucceſsful. It is the ſavings of the indigent that have built thoſe ſuperb edifices, to which they go begging their bread. It is to them thoſe altars owe their luxury, to which they are hardly admitted. For ever a ſtranger, for ever repulſed, the poor are not permitted to ſit on the ſtone they have paid for carving: pompous prieſts richly endowed, live under thoſe roofs, that in equity, at leaſt, ought to afford them an aſylum."

CHAP.

CHAP. XL.

ON COMMERCE.

IT ſeems, by what you have told me, that France has no longer any colonies in the new world; that each part of America forms a ſeparate kingdom though united under one ſpirit of legiſlation? "We ſhould be highly ridiculous to ſend our dear fellow citizens two thouſand leagues from us. Why ſhould we thus eſtrange ourſelves from our brethren? Our climate is at leaſt as good as that of America. Every neceſſary production is here common, and by nature excellent. The colonies were to France what a country-houſe is to a private perſon: the houſe in the country, ſooner or later, ruins that in town.

"We have a commerce, but it conſiſts merely in the exchange of ſuperfluities among ourſelves. We have prudently baniſhed three natural poiſons, of which you made perpetual uſe; ſnuff, coffee, and tea. You ſtuffed your heads with a villanous powder, that deprived you Frenchmen of what little memory you had. You burned your ſtomach with liquors that deſtroyed it by encreaſing its action. Thoſe nervous diſorders ſo common among you were owing to the effeminate liquor which carried off the nouriſhing juice of the animal life. We cultivate an interior commerce only, of which we find the good effects; founded principally on agriculture, it diſtributes the moſt neceſſary aliments; it ſatisfies the wants of man, but not his pride.

"No

"No man blushes to till his own ground, and to improve it to the highest degree possible. Our monarch himself has several acres which are cultivated under his own eye. We have not among us any of those titled gentry, whose only pursuit was idleness.

"Foreign traffic was the real father of that destructive luxury, which produced in its turn that horrid inequality of fortunes, which caused all the wealth of the nation to pass into a few hands. Because a woman could carry in her ears the patrimony of ten families, the peasant was forced to sell the land of his ancestors, and to fly, with tears, from that soil where he found nought but misery and disgrace: for those insatiable monsters, who had accumulated the gold, even derided the misfortunes of those they had plundered*. We began by destroying those great

* I smile with indignant pity when I see so many fine projects offered for the improvement of agriculture and population, while the taxes continually increasing, rob the people of the sweat of their brow; and the price of corn is augmented by the monopoly of those who have all the money of the kingdom in their hands. Must we for ever cry to those proud and obdurate ears. "Give us a full and unbounded liberty of commerce and navigation, and a diminution of taxes." These are the only means of nourishing the people, and preventing that depopulation which we see already begun. But, alas! patriotism is a contraband virtue. The man who lives for himself alone, who thinks of nought but himself, who is silent, and turns away his eyes for fear of horror, he is the good citizen; they even praise his prudence and moderation. For my own part, I cannot remain

great companies, that abſorbed all the fortunes of individuals, annihilated the generous boldneſs of a nation, and gave as deadly a blow to morality as to the ſtate.

"It may be very agreeable to ſip chocolate, to breathe the odour of ſpices, to eat ſugar and ananas, to drink Barbadoes water, and to be clothed in the gaudy ſtuffs of India. But are theſe ſenſations ſufficiently voluptuous to cloſe our eyes againſt the crowd of unheard of evils that your luxury engendered in the two hemiſpheres? You violated the moſt ſacred ties of blood and nature on the coaſt of Guinea. You armed the father againſt the ſon, while you pretended to the name of Chriſtians and of men. Blind barbarians! You have been but too well convinced by a fatal experience. A thirſt for gold extolled by every heart; amiable moderation baniſhed by avidity; juſtice and virtue regarded as chimeras; avarice pale, and reſtleſs, plowing the waves, and peopling with carcaſes the depths of the ocean; a whole race of men bought and ſold, treated as the vileſt animals; kings become merchants, covering the ſeas with blood for the flag of a frigate: Gold,

remain ſilent, I muſt declare what I have ſeen. It is into moſt of the provinces of France that we muſt go to ſee the people completely miſerable. It is now, in 1770, three winters together that we have ſeen bread dear. The laſt year one half of the peaſants had need of public charity, and this winter will complete their ruin; for they who have lived till now ſelling their effects, have nothing left to ſell. Theſe poor people have a patience that makes me admire the force of the laws and of education.

to conclude, flowing from the mines of Peru like a flaming river, and running into Europe, burned up every where in its courſe the roots of happineſs, and was then for ever loſt on the eaſtern world, where ſuperſtition buried in the earth, on one ſide, what avarce had painfully drawn from it, on the other. Behold a faithful picture of the advantages that foreign commerce produced to the world.

"Our veſſels do not make the tour of the globe, to bring back cochineal and indigo. Know you where are our mines? Where is our Peru? In labour and aſſiduity. All that promotes eaſe and convenience, that directly tends to aſſiſt nature, is cultivated with the greateſt care. All that belongs to pomp, to oſtentation and vanity, to a puerile deſire of an excluſive poſſeſſion of what is merely the work of fancy, is ſeverely prohibited. We have caſt into the ſea thoſe deceitful diamonds, thoſe dangerous pearls, and all thoſe whimſical ſtones that rendered the heart, like, them impenetrable. You thought yourſelves highly ingenious in the refinements of luxury, but your purſuits were merely after ſuperfluities, after the ſhadow of greatneſs; you were not even voluptuous. Your futile and miſerable inventions were confined to a day. You were nothing more than children fond of glaring objects, incapable of ſatisfying your real wants. Ignorant of the art of happineſs, you fatigued yourſelves, far from the object of your purſuits, and miſtook, at every ſtep, the image for the reality.

"When

"When our veſſels leave their harbours, they take not thunder with them, to ſeize on the vaſt extent of waters, a fugitive prey that forms a point ſcarce perceptible to the ſight. The echo of the waves bears not to heaven the hideous cries of furious wretches that diſpute, at the expence of life itſelf, a paſſage over the immenſe and vacant ocean. We viſit diſtant nations, but inſtead of the productions of their lands, we bring home the moſt uſeful diſcoveries relative to their legiſlature, their phyſical life, and their manners. Our veſſels ſerve to connect our aſtronomical knowledge; more than three hundred obſervatories erected on this globe are ready to mark the leaſt alteration that occurs in the heavens. The earth is the poſt where watches the centinel of the firmament who never ſleeps. Aſtronomy is become an important ſcience, as it proclaims, with a majeſtic voice, the glory of the Creator, and the dignity of that thinking being who has proceeded from his hands. But now we talk of commerce, let us not forget the moſt extraordinary kind that ever exiſted. You ought to be very rich," he ſaid, "for in your youth, doubtleſs, you placed out money on annuities, eſpecially on ſurvivorſhips, as did one half of Paris. An invention of wonderful ingenuity was that ſort of lottery, where they played at life and death, and the winnings were to go to the longeſt liver! You ſhould have a moſt plentiful annuity! They renounced father and mother, brother and ſiſter, all friends and relations, to double their revenue. They made the king their heir, then ſlept in a profound indolence, and lived only for themſelves."—Ah! why do you

tell me of these matters? Those rueful edicts that completed our corruption, and dissolved connections, till then held sacred; that barbarous refinement which publickly consecrated self-love, that detached the citizens from each other, and made them solitary and lifeless beings, drew tears from my eyes, when I reflected on the future condition of the state. I saw private fortunes melt away, and the excessive mass of opulence swell by their dissolution; but the fatal blow that was given to morals affected me still more deeply; no longer any connection between hearts that ought to be devoted to each other; they gave to interest a keener sword; interest of itself already so formidable; the sovereign authority laid those barriers at its feet, that it would never have dared to attack of itself.—"Good old man," said my guide, "you have done well to sleep, or you would have seen the annuitants and the state punished for their mutual imprudence. Politics, since that period, has made no such solecism; it does not now ruin, but unite and enrich the citizens."

CHAP.

CHAP. XLI.

THE EVENING.

THE ſun was was going down. My guide invited me to go with him to the houſe of one of his friends, where he was to ſup. I did not want much intreaty. I had not yet ſeen the inſide of their houſes, and that, in my judgment, is the moſt intereſting ſight in every city. In reading hiſtory, I paſs over many paſſages, but am ever curious in examining the detail of domeſtic life: that once done, I have no need to learn the reſt; I can form a natural conjecture.

On entering, I found none of thoſe petty apartments that ſeem to be cells for lunatics, whoſe walls are ſcarce ſix inches thick, and where they freeze in winter, and ſcorch in ſummer. The rooms were large and ſonorous; you might walk at your eaſe. A ſolid roof guarded them from the piercing cold and the burning rays of the ſun; theſe houſes, moreover, did not grow old with thoſe that built them.

I entered the ſaloon, and preſently diſtinguiſhed the maſter of the houſe. He ſaluted me without grimace or reſerve*. His wife and children behaved in

* How falſe and diminutive is our politeneſs! And how odious and inſulting is that aſſumed by the great! It is a

 maſk

in his preſence in a free but reſpectful manner; and monſieur, or the eldeſt ſon, did not give me a ſpecimen of his wit by ridiculing his father; neither his mother, nor his grand-mother would have been charmed with ſuch witicifms*. His ſiſters were neither affectedly polite, nor totally inſenſible; they received us in a graceful manner, and reſumed their ſeveral employments; they did not watch all my motions, nor did my great age and broken voice make them once ſmile; they diſplayed none of that unnatural complaiſance, which is ſo contrary to true politeneſs. This room was not decorated with twenty brittle, taſteleſs bawbles. There was no gilding, varniſhing, porcelain†, or wretched figures. In their place was a lively tapeſtry, pleaſing to the ſight, and ſome finiſhed prints; a remarkable neatneſs graced this ſaloon, that of itſelf was elegant and lightſome.

We

maſk more hideous than the moſt ugly of all faces. All thoſe reverences, thoſe affected geſticulations, are inſufferable to a real man. The falſe brilliancy of our manners is more diſguſtful than the groſſeſt behaviour of a clown.

* There is a licentiouſneſs of the mind which is far more dangerous than that of the ſenſes; and it is at this time the principal vice that infects the youth of our capital.

† What a miſerable luxury is that of porcelain! A cat, a bruſh with the ſleeve, may deſtroy in a moment more than the produce of twenty acres.

We joined converſation, but there was no ſporting with paradoxes*; that execrable wit, which was the plague of the age I lived in, did not give falſe colours to things that were by nature perfectly ſimple. No one maintained the direct contrary of what was aſſerted by another, merely to diſplay his talents†. Theſe people talked from principle, and did not

* Converſation animates the rencounter of ideas, brings forth the treaſures of the mind, and is one of the greateſt pleaſures of life: it is moreover that of all others I moſt highly enjoy. But in the world, I have remarked, that inſtead of nouriſhing, ſtrengthening, and elevating the mind, it enervates and degrades it. All things are now become problematical. By an abuſe of reaſon, the very exiſtence of objects is in a manner deſtroyed. We meet with panegyrics on the moſt enormous abuſes. All things are juſtified. They embrace, unknown to themſelves, a thouſand puerile and extravagant ideas.—Their minds become diſtorted by the colliſion of oppoſite opinions. There is, I know not what poiſon, that inſinuates itſelf, mounts to the head, and clouds your primitive ideas, which are commonly the moſt juſt. Avarice, ambition, and luxury, have ſo ſubtle a logic, that after hearing them, you have no longer your former abhorrence for thoſe by whom they are practiſed; they all prove themſelves to be innocent. We muſt quickly fly to ſolitude to regain a vigorous abhorence of vice. The world makes us familiar whith thoſe crimes it applauds, and affects us with its deluſive ſpirit. By too much frequenting men, we become leſs men; we receive from them a falſe light that leads us aſtray. It is by ſhutting the door that we recollect ourſelves, that we perceive the pure light of truth, which never ſhines among the multitude.

† The decrees of idleneſs are as unjuſt as thoſe of vanity.

ont contradict themselves twenty times in a quarter of an hour. The spirit of this conversation was not directed by starts, and without being profuse or dull, they did not pass, in the same breath, from the birth of a prince to the drowning of a dog.

The young people did not affect a childish manner, a drawling or lisping language, nor a proud careless aspect and attitude*. I heard no licentious proposal, nor did any one declaim in a gloomy, tedious, heavy manner, against those consolatory truths, that are the delight and comfort of sensible minds†. The women did not affect a tone by turns languishing and imperious; they were decent, reserved, modest, and engaged in an easy suitable employment; idleness had no charms for them; they did not rise at noon because they were to do nothing at night. I was highly pleased with their not proposing cards; that insipid diversion, invented to amuse an idiot monarch, and which is constantly pleasing to the numerous herd of dunces, who are thereby enabled to conceal their profound ignorance, had disappeared from

* A pretty fellow in France must be slender, weakly, and not have more than twelve ounces of flesh on his bones; he should likewise have a pain in his stomach, and a very poor state of health. A man that is strong and hearty is a hideous creature. It becomes the Swiss and porters only, to have a masculine figure and a florid state of health.

† Pyrrhonism supposes sometimes more prejudices than a natural disposition to receive the appearances of truth.

from among a people who knew too well how to improve the moments of life to waſte them in a practice at once ſo dull and faſtidious*. I ſaw none of thoſe green tables, on which men ruin themſelves unpitied. Avarice did not moleſt theſe honeſt citizens, even in the moments conſecrated to leiſure. They did not make a fatigue of what ſhould be a mere relaxation†. If they played, it was at draughts, or cheſs, thoſe ancient and ſtudious games, that offer an infinite variety of combinations to the mind. There were alſo other games they called mathematical recreations, and with which even their children were acquainted.

I obſerved that each one followed his inclination without being remarked by the reſt of the company.

* With our author's leave, card-playing is not always a proper employment for dunces; for though cards are frequently, indeed commonly, introduced to ſupply a dearth of converſation, yet there are ſeveral games that require a ſtrong exertion of all the faculties of the mind. No dunce, no man of indifferent capacity, ever played the game of piquet or ombre well.

† I dread the approach of winter, not for the ſeverity of the ſeaſon, but becauſe it brings with it a wretched thirſt for gaming. That ſeaſon is the moſt fatal to morals, and the moſt inſupportable to philoſophy. It is then thoſe noiſy and inſipid aſſemblies ſtart up; where all the futile paſſions exerciſe their ridiculous empire. The taſte for trifles then dictates the mode. All the men, metamorphoſed into effeminate ſlaves, are ſubordinate to the caprice of the women, for whom, at the very time, they have neither eſteem nor affection.

company. There were no female ſpies, who, by cenſuring others, diſcharged themſelves of that foul humour which rankles their ſouls, and which they frequently owe as much to their deformity as their folly. Theſe converſed, thoſe turned over a book of prints, one examined the pictures, and another amuſed himſelf with a book in a corner. They formed no circle to communicate a gaping that runs all round. In a room adjoining was a concert; it was that of ſweet flutes united with the human voice. The clanging harpſicord, and the monotonous fiddle, here yielded to the enchanting powers of a fine woman; what inſtrument can have greater effect upon the heart? The improved harmonica, however, ſeemed to diſpute the prize; it breathed the moſt pure, full, and melodious ſounds that can charm the ear. It was a raviſhing and celeſtial muſic, that is far from being rivalled by the clamour of our operas, where the man of taſte and ſenſibility ſeeks for the conſonance of unity, but ſeeks in vain.

I was highly charmed. They did not remain continually ſeated, nailed to a chair, and obliged to maintain an eternal converſation about nothing, and that too with the utmoſt ſolemnity*. The women were not continually wrangling about metaphyſics; and if they ſpoke about poetry, of dramas, or authors, they conſtantly acknowledged themſelves, notwith-

* In common converſation we meet with two circumſtances equally diſagreeable, to have nothing to ſay, and yet be forced to talk; or to have ſomething to ſay when the converſation is over.

notwithſtanding their great abilities, unequal to the ſubject*.

They deſired me to walk into an adjoining room, where ſupper was prepared. I looked at the clock with ſurprize, it was not yet ſeven. Come, Sir, ſaid the maſter of the houſe, taking me by the hand, we do not paſs our nights by the light of wax candles. We think the ſun ſo beautiful, that it is to us a pleaſure to ſee its firſt rays dart on the horizon. We do not go to bed with a loaded ſtomach, to experience broken ſlumbers attended by fantaſtic dreams. We carefully guard our health, as on that the ſerenity of the mind depends†. We are moreover fond of gay and pleaſing dreams‡.

There

* A woman never thinks cloſely but when ſhe meditates on the leſſons of a favourite gallant ¶; and how many men are there like women?

¶ This is certainly not juſt; our author, as a Frenchman, ſhould have remembered the name of Dacier, and not have expreſſed himſelf in ſuch unlimited terms.

† Health is to happineſs, what the dew of heaven is to the fruits of the earth.

‡ Happy are they who enjoy the ſenſation of health; that tranquil ſtate of body, that equilibrium, that perfect agreement of all the humours, that happy diſpoſition of all the organs, by which their ſtrength and agility are ſupported. That general perfect health is of itſelf a high enjoyment. It is not rapturous; granted: but as it alone ſurpaſſes all other pleaſures, it gives that contentment to the mind, that internal

There was a general ſilence. The father of the family bleſſed the food that was ſet before us. This graceful and holy cuſtom was revived; and it appeared to me important, as perpetually reminding us of that gratitude we owe to God, who inceſſantly ſupplies us with ſubſiſtence. I was more buſy in examining the table than in eating. I ſhall not dwell on the neatneſs and elegance that there prevailed. The domeſtics ſat at the bottom of the table, and eat with their maſters; they had therefore the more reſpect for them; they received by this means leſſons of probity, which they laid up in their hearts; they thereby became more enlightened, and were not coarſe or inſolent, as they were not longer regarded as baſe. Liberty, gaiety, a decent familiarity, dilated the heart and glowed in the front of every gueſt. Every one had his meſs placed before him; no one crowded his neighbour; no one coveted a diſh that was diſtant from him; he would have been reckoned a glutton, who was not content with his portion, for it was quite ſufficient. Many people eat exceſſively more from habit than real appetite*. They had learned

internal and delicious calm, which makes exiſtence dear to us, enables us to admire the face of nature, and render grateful thanks to the Author of our being. Not to be ſick, is alone a ſoothing pleaſure. I readily call him a philoſopher, who, ſenſible of the dangers, of exceſs, and the advantages of moderation, knows how to bridle his appetites, and live without pain: how important a ſecret!

* Anatomy demonſtrates, that our organs of pleaſure are covered with ſmall pyramidical eminences. The leſs obtuſe

learned to correct that fault without a sumptuary law.

None of the meats I tasted had any discernable seasoning, for which I was not sorry. I found a savour in them, a natural salt which seemed to me delicious. I saw none of those refined dishes that pass through the hands of several sophisticators, of those ragouts, those inflammatory sauces, rarified in small, but costly dishes which hasten the destruction of the human race, at the same time that they burn up the entrails. These were not a voracious people, who devour more than the magnificence of nature, with all her generative

tuse they are made by frequent use, the more sensible and elastic they remain, and the more ready to recover their tone. Nature, a tender and careful mother, has so constructed them, that they preserve their spring to advanced age, when their requisite subtility, their due asperity is not destroyed. It depends therefore on man to reserve pleasure for every age of life. But what does the intemperate wretch? He destroys this precious organism: he vitiates that delicate sensation, by making those parts flat and hard; he reduces a being almost celestial, and endowed with pleasures peculiar to himself, to the rank of a wretched automaton. What animal, in matters of enjoyment has been more favoured than man? Who but he can contemplate the firmament, distinguish the pleasing forms and colours of the minutest bodies, breathe the most grateful odours, and comprehend all the various inflections of the voice, receive rapturous pleasure from paintings, eloquence, and poetry, and plunge with the greatest delight into the depths of algebra and geometry, &c.? He who said that man was an abridgment of the universe, asserted a great and pleasing truth. Man appears to be connected with all that exists.

tive faculties, can produce. If ever luxury be odious, that of the table is the moſt deteſtable; for if the rich, by an abuſe of their wealth, diſſipate the nouriſhing fruits of the earth, the poor muſt neceſſarily pay the dearer for them, and, what is worſe, frequently not have a competency*.

The herbs and fruits were all of the ſeaſon; they knew not the ſecret of producing wretched cherries in the midſt of the winter; they were not ſolicitous for the firſt produce, but left nature to ripen her fruits. The palate was thereby better pleaſed, and the body better nouriſhed. They gave us a deſert of ſome excellent fruit and ſome old wine; but none of thoſe ecloured liquors diſtilled from brandy, ſo much in uſe in my time; they were as ſeverely prohibited as arſenic. This people were ſenſible, that there was no pleaſure in procuring a ſlow and cruel death.

The maſter of the houſe ſaid to me with a ſmile, "You muſt certainly think this a pitiful deſert; here are neither trees, nor caſtles, nor wind-mills, nor any other figures of confectionary†; that ridiculous extravagance

* The unfeeling man is preciſely him whom the world calls a man of taſte.

† O France! O my country! wouldſt thou know wherein thy true glory now conſiſts, thy real pre-eminence over other nations? Hear: thou excelleſt in the invention of faſhions; they are adopted in the extremities of the North, in all the courts of Germany, even within the Seraglio; in a word, by all the four parts of the earth. Thy cooks, thy confectioners are the moſt excellent in the univerſe; and every nation in Europe admires thy dancers.

travagance which could not produce the leaſt real pleaſure, was formerly the delight of thoſe great children that were become dotards. Your magiſtrates, who, at leaſt ought to have given examples of frugality, and not authoriſed by their practice, an inſolent and pitiful luxury; thoſe magiſtrates, they ſay, thoſe fathers of the people, at the commencement of every parliament, were in extaſies at the ſight of groteſque figures made of ſugar; from whence we may eaſily judge of the emulation of other ranks to excel the men of the long robe."——You can have but an imperfect idea of our induſtry, I replied; in my time, they exhibited, on a table ten feet wide, an opera of ſweetmeats, with all its machines, decorations, oreheſtra, actors, and dancers, with the ſhifting of the ſcenes, in the ſame manner as at the theatre of the Palais-Royal. During the exhibition, the whole people beſieged the door, to enjoy the great happineſs of a glimpſe of this ſuperb deſert, the whole expence of which they certainly paid. The poor people admired the wonderful magnificence of their princes, and thought themſelves very inſignificant, when compared with ſuch greatneſs..... The whole company laughed heartily; we roſe from table with gaiety; we rendered thanks to God; and no one complained of vapours or indgeſtion.

CHAP. XLII.

THE GAZETTES.

ON returning to the former room, I ſaw lying on the table large ſheets of paper, twice as long as the Engliſh news-papers. I eagerly ſeized theſe printed ſheets, and found that they were intitled, News public and private. As nothing can equal the ſupriſe I felt on reading every page, determined as I was never more to be ſurpriſed, I ſhall here tranſcribe thoſe articles that ſtruck me moſt, as near as my memory will permit.

* * *

From PEKIN, *the* ....

They repreſented before the emperor the tragedy of Cinna. The clemency of Auguſtus, with the beauty and dignity of the other characters, made a great impreſſion on all the audience.

O what an impudent lying gazette is here! I ſaid to the perſon who ſtood next me. Read .... "Nay," he replied very coolly, "there is nothing more likely. I myſelf have ſeen the Orphan of China repreſented at Pekin. You muſt know, that I am a mandarin, and that I love letters as much as juſtice. I have traverſed the Royal Canal*; I arrived here in

* The Royal Canal divides China, from north to ſouth, for the ſpace of ſix hundred leagues. It is joined by lakes, rivers,

in about four months, and amuſed myſelf by the way. I was anxious to ſee that Paris, of which I had heard ſo much, and to inform myſelf of a thouſand things, which it is abſolutely neceſſary to ſee, clearly to comprehend. The French language has been common at Pekin for theſe two centuries paſt; and, on my return, I ſhall take with me ſeveral good books that I intend to tranſlate."—You do not then, Mr. Mandarin, ſtill uſe your hieroglyphic language, and have abrogated that extraordinary law, which forbade any one of you to leave the empire?—"It was quite neceſſary to change our language and adopt more ſimple characters, if we would maintain a correſpondence with you. This was not more difficult than it is to learn algebra or geometry. Our emperor has repealed the law that forbade travelling, as he very rightly judged, that you did not all reſemble thoſe prieſts whom we named demi-diables, from their attempts to allumine the torch of diſcord even in our diſtant country. If I do not miſtake the epoch, a more cloſe and intimate connection was formed on account of certain copperplates which you had engraved.

rivers, &c. This empire abounds with like canals, many of which run ten leagues in a ſtraight line; they ſupply moſt of the cities with proviſions. Their bridges have a boldneſs and magnificence ſuperior to any thing of the kind that Europe can produce. And we, weak, trifling, pitiful in all our public works, we employ our ingenuity, labour, and wonderful knowledge, in ornamenting objects of mere vanity, in erecting magnificent bawbles; almoſt all that we call maſter-pieces of art are nothing more than the ſports of children.

graved. That art was then new to us, and highly admired. We have since almoſt equalled you."—O, I underſtand you; the deſigns of thoſe plates repreſented battles; they were ſent to us by that poetic monarch to whom Voltaire addreſſed a beautiful ode; and our king having charged his beſt artiſts with their execution, ſent them as a preſent to *The charming emperor of China*.—" Right. Since that time the intercourſe has been eſtabliſhed, and by degrees the ſciences have paſſed from one country to the other, like bills of exchange. The opinions of one man have become thoſe of the univerſe. It is printing, that noble invention, which has propagated this light. The tyrants of human reaſon, with their hundred hands, have not been able to ſtop its invincible courſe. Nothing can be more rapid than that ſalutary motion given to the moral world by the ſun of arts; it has ſurrounded every object with a pure and durable ſplendor.

" The baſtinado is no longer practiſed in China; and the mandarins do not now reſemble the heads of a college; the common people are not ſlothful and fraudulent, as the greateſt pains has been taken to improve their minds; ignominious puniſhments no longer cruſh them to the earth; they have been inſpired with notions of honour. We conſtantly venerate Confucius, who was almoſt cotemporary with your Socrates, and who, like him, did not ſubtilize on the principal of Beings, but contented himſelf with declaring that nothing is hid from him, and that he will puniſh vice and reward virtue. Our Confucius

had

had one advantage over the Grecian sage; he did not boldly attack those religious prejudices, which, for want of a more noble support, were the basis of the morals of the people; he waited patiently, till truth, without tumult and labour, should exert its own power. In short, it was he, who proved that a monarch must necessarily be a philosopher to govern his people justly. Our emperor still holds the plow; but it is not an act of vain œconomy or puerile ostentation...."

Urged by a desire to read and hear at the same time, while I listened on one side, my eye, not less curious, ran over the pages of this gazette. I read as follows.

* * *

Jeddo, the capital of Japan, the....

The descendants of the great Taico, who caused Dairi, to be regarded as an impotent, though revered idol, have just translated the Spirit of Laws, and the Treatise on Crimes and Punishments.

The venerable Amida has been conducted through all the streets; but no one offered himself to be crushed by his chariot-wheels.

A free entrance is granted at Japan; and every one there eagerly profits by the arts of foreigners. Suicide is no longer a virtue among these people; they

they have discovered that it was the consequence of *dispute*, or of a foolish and criminal infatuability.

* * *

Persia, the....

The king of Persia has dined with his brothers, who have remarkable fine eyes. They assist in the government of the empire: their principal employment is to read the dispatches. The sacred books of Zoroaster and Sadder are constantly read and respected; but there is now no mention made of Omar, or of Ali.

* * *

Mexico, the....

This city has completely regained the ancient splendor it enjoyed under the august government of princes descended from the renowned Montezuma. Our emperor, on his advancement to the throne, rebuilt the palace in the form it had in the days of his ancestors. The Indians no longer go bare-foot and without linen. They have erected in the great square the statue of Guatimozin, extended on the burning coals; and under it are wrote these words, *And I, am I on a bed of roses?*

Pray tell me, I said to the Mandarin, is it then forbid to name the empire of New Spain? He replied "When the avenger of the New World had drove away

away the tyrants, (the talents of Mahomet and Cæsar united would not have nearly equalled those of that wonderful man) this formidable deliverer contented himself with being a legislator. He laid down the sword, to display to the nations the sacred code of the laws. You can form no idea of so transcendent a genius; his powerful eloquence resembled the voice of the divinity descended upon the earth. America was divided into two empires; that of North America contains Mexico, Canada, the Antilles, Jamaica, and St. Domingo; to that of South America belongs Peru, Paraguay, Chili, the land of Magellan, and the country of the Amasons; but each of these kingdoms has a separate monarch, who is himself subject to a general law, almost in the same manner as, in your time, the flourishing empire of Germany, while divided into various monarchies, formed but one body under one general sovereign.

"Thus the blood of Montezuma, for a long time obscured and concealed, again mounted the throne. All these monarchs are patriot princes, who have no other object than the maintenance of public liberty. This great man, this renowned legislator, this negro, in whom nature had exerted all her force, has inspired them with his great and virtuous spirit. These vast states repose and flourish in a perfect concord, the slow, but infallible work of reason. The ravages of the ancient world, their cruel and childish wars, the rivers of blood idly wasted, and the shame for having caused them; in a word, the folly of ambition, plainly

plainly demonſtrated, has been ſufficient to induce the new continent to make peace with the titular deity of their country. In our days a war would diſhonour a ſtate, as robbery diſhonours a private perſon." I continued to read and liſten.

* * *

Paraguay, from the city of the Aſſumption, the....

We have juſt held a ſolemn feaſt, in memory of the abolition of that diſgraceful ſlavery to which this nation had been reduced, under the deſpotic empire of the Jeſuits. For ſix centuries paſt, we have regarded it as a ſpecial favour of Providence that enabled us to drive out thoſe wolf-foxes from their laſt retreat. This nation, however, is not ingrate, for it acknowledges the advantage of being raiſed from wretchedneſs and inſtructed in agriculture and the arts by thoſe Jeſuits. Happy, if they had contented themſelves with inſtructing mankind, and giving them ſacred laws of morality.

* * *

From Philadelphia, the capital of Pennſylvania, the....

This province, where humanity, faith, liberty, concord, and equality, have taken refuge for more than eight hundred years, is covered with the moſt elegant and flouriſhing cities. Virtue has performed more here than courage has among other nations. Thoſe

Thoſe generous quakers*, the moſt virtuous of mankind, by affording to the world a people that are all brethren, have ſerved as a model to hearts that have become humanized by their example. We know that they have been able, from the time of their origin, to give mankind a thouſand examples of generoſity and beneficence. It is well known that they were the firſt who refuſed to ſhed the blood of man; and that they regard war as a weak and barbarous frenzy. It is they that have undeceived thoſe nations who were the miſerable victims of the quarrels of their kings. They have juſt publiſhed their annual exhortation, in which are contained thoſe practical virtues, which ſet to their faith the ſeal of perfection.

Morocco,

* How can the princes of the North refrain from covering themſelves with immortal glory by baniſhing ſlavery from their dominions, by reſtoring to the labourer of the land at leaſt his perſonal liberty? How can they be deaf to the cry of humanity, which conſtantly excites them to that act of glorious beneficence? By what motive can they be induced to hold in an odious ſervitude, and one that is contrary to their real intereſt, the moſt induſtrious part of their ſubjects, when they have before their eyes the example of thoſe quakers who have given liberty to all their negro ſlaves? How is it poſſible for them not to be ſenſible, that their ſubjects will be more faithful by being more free: and that they muſt ceaſe to be ſlaves ere they can become men.

* * *

Morocco, the ....

We have discovered a comet that is going toward the sun. This is the three hundred and fifty-first that has been observed since the erecting of our observatory. The observations made in the interior parts of Africa, correspond exactly with ours.

They have put to death an inhabitant who had assaulted a Frenchman, in conformity to the ordinance of our sovereign, whose will it is that every stranger shall be regarded as a brother who is come to visit his intimate friends.

* * *

Siam, the ....

Our navigation makes a most astonishing progress. We have launched six vessels of three decks, which are destined for long voyages.

Our king presents himself to all that desire to behold his august person. There is not a more affable monarch existing, especially when he resorts to the pagod of the great Sommonacodom.

The white elephant is kept at the menagery, but merely as an object of curiosity, as he is perfect in the exercise of the riding-school.

From

* * *

From the COAST *of* MALABAR, *the* ....

The widow .... who is young, handſome, and adorned with every accompliſhment, has ſincerely deplored the death of her huſband, who was burned alone; and after mourning, more in her heart than in her dreſs, has been re-married to a young man, by whom ſhe is alſo tenderly beloved. This new connection has rendered her ſtill more reſpectable to all her fellow-citizens.

* * *

From the LAND *of* MAGELLAN, *the* ...

The twenty fortunate iſlands, who lived, without knowing it, in all the innocence and happineſs of the firſt ages, are lately united; they now form an aſſociation truly fraternal and reciprocally uſeful.

* * *

From the LAND *of* PAPOS*, *the* ....

As we advance into this fifth part of the world, our diſcoveries become every day more extenſive and intereſting. We are ſurpriſed at its riches, fertility, and its numerous inhabitants, who here live in continual peace. They may juſtly diſdain our arts; their morality is ſtill more admirable than their phyſics.

The

* The land of Papos is four thouſand leagues diſtant from Paris.

The ſun, in all theſe immenſe regions, more extenſive than Aſia and Africa united, beholds not one unfortunate being; while Europe, ſo diminutive, ſo poor, and divided into ſo many parts, has almoſt hardened her ſoil with human bones.

* * *

From the Iſland of Taiti in the South Sea, the....

When M. Bougainville diſcovered this happy iſland where reign the manners of the golden age, he did not fail to take poſſeſſion of it in the name of his maſter. He at laſt re-embarked and took with him a Taitian, who in 1770 attracted the curioſity of Paris for a week. It was not then known that a Frenchman induced by the beauty of the climate, the candour of its inhabitants, and ſtill more by the miſery which threatened that innocent people, concealed himſelf at the time his comrades embarked. The veſſel had no ſooner diſappeared, than he preſented himſelf to the people; he aſſembled them in a large plain, and made the following ſpeech:

"I have choſe to remain among you for my own "happineſs, and for yours. Receive me as a bro-"ther; you will ſee that I deſerve that title, as I "offer to ſave you from the moſt horrid calamity. O "happy people, who live in all the ſimplicity of "nature! little do you think of the miſeries that "threaten you! Theſe ſtrangers you have enter-"tained, and who ſeemed ſo polite, whom you have "loaded with civilities and preſents, and whom at

"this

" this moment I betray, if it be treachery to prevent " the ruin of a virtuous people; these strangers, my " countrymen, will soon return, and bring with them " all those plagues that afflict other countries; they " will infect you with poisons and maladies of which " you have no conception; they will load you with " fetters; and, by their cruel arguments they will " prove it to be for your advantage. Behold this " pyramid they have erected, which declares, that " this land is already dependent on them, and marks " you as the subjects of a monarch, of whose very " name you are ignorant. You are all destined to " obey new laws. They will strip the harvest from " your lands, will despoil your trees of their fruit, " and seize on your persons. That happy equality " which reigns among you will be abolished. Per- " haps, your blood will bathe those flowers that now " bend under the weight of your innocent embraces. " Love is the god of this island; it is consecrated, so " to say, to his worship. Hatred and vengeance will " take his place. You are yet even ignorant of the " use of arms; they will teach you what is war, mur- " der, and slavery...."

At these words, the people turned pale, and remained fixed in astonishment. Thus a company of children, interrupted in the midst of their pleasing sports, will be seized with terror, when a dreadful voice shall tell them the world is at an end, and make them sensible of calamities that their tranquil minds had never conceived.

The orator continued, "People, whom I love; "and for whom my heart yearns! There is yet a "way to preserve your liberty and your happiness. "Let every stranger that lands on your coast be "sacrificed to the safety of your country. The de- "cree is cruel; but the love of your children and of "your posterity should make you embrace it. You "would be more shocked, were I to relate to you "the horrid cruelties that the Europeans have ex- "ercised toward people, who, like you, were weak "and innocent. Guard yourselves against the con- "tagious breath that proceeds from their lips; even "their very smiles are signals of the miseries with "which they intend to overwhelm you."

The heads of the nation assembled, and by an unanimous voice invested him with the chief authority who had been their general benefactor, by preserving them from such horrible calamities. The decree of death against every stranger was executed with a virtuous and patriotic rigour; as it was formerly in Taurida, by a people in appearance as innocent, but jealous of forming any connection with nations who were skilful in arts, but at the same time, cruel and tyrannic.

They write, that this law has been lately abolished, because by repeated informations they have learned that Europe is no longer the enemy of the other three parts of the globe; that it does not now attack the liberty of peaceful nations far distant from it; that it is not shamefully jealous of the power of its several

ſovereigns; that it is ambitious of forming friends, and not making ſlaves; that its veſſels go in ſearch of examples of ſimple and refined manners, and not of contemptible riches, &c. &c. &c.

* * *

Petersburgh, the . . . .

The moſt noble of all titles is that of legiſlator. A ſovereign then approaches neareſt to the Divinity, when he gives ſagacious and durable laws to a nation. We ſtill repeat with rapture the auguſt name of Catharine II. We no longer talk of her conqueſts and her triumphs, but of her laws. Her ambition was to diſſipate the darkneſs of ignorance, and to ſubſtitute, in the room of barbarous cuſtoms, laws dictated by humanity. More happy, more glorious than Peter the Great, becauſe more humane, ſhe applied herſelf, notwithſtanding all oppoſite examples, to make her people flouriſhing and happy; which they were, in defiance of public and domeſtic ſtorms that ſhook her throne. By her courage, ſhe was enabled to fortify a crown that the univerſe beheld with pleaſure on her brow. We muſt go very far back into antiquity to find a legiſlator of equal dignity and ſagacity. —The chains that bound the labourers of the land were broken. She raiſed her front, and ſaw them with delight exalted to the rank of men. The fabricators of luxury no longer found their profeſſions more lucrative or more honourable. The genius of humanity cried aloud to all the inhabitants of the North, *Men! be free; and remember future generations,*

that it is to a woman you owe all the happiness you enjoy.

At the last numbering of the inhabitants of all the Russias, they amounted to forty-five millions of people. In 1769, they counted only fourteen millions; but, by the sagacity of the legislator, her humane code of laws, and the throne of her successors being firmly established by their generosity and affability, the population of this empire is become equal to its extent, which is greater than that of Augustus or Alexander. The constitution of government, moreover, is no longer military; the sovereign calls himself only autocrate, the universe in general is too enlightened to bear the former odious government*.

* * *

Warsaw, the ....

An anarchy the most absurd and injurious to the rights of man, who is born free, and the most oppressive to the people, no longer troubles Poland. The renowned Catherine II. had formerly a wonderful influence over the affairs of this kingdom; and they still remember with gratitude, that it was she

* He who had said fourscore years since, that at Peterfburgh they would, at this time, follow our modes, our perukes, our coifs, and comic operas, would certainly have passed for a madman. We must patiently consent to be called fools, when we publish ideas that extend beyond the horizon of the vulgar. All things in Europe tend to a sudden revolution.

ſhe who gave to the peaſant his perſonal liberty, and the property of his effects. The king died at ſix laſt night: his ſon mounted the throne in peace the ſame evening, and received the homage of all the palatine nobles.

* * *

CONSTANTINOPLE, *the*....

It was a great happineſs for the world when the Turk, in the eighteenth century, was driven out of Europe. Every friend to humanity rejoiced at the fall of that baneful empire, where the monſter Deſpotiſm was careſſed by the infamous baſhaws, who only proſtrated themſelves before him, that they might exceed his horrid oppreſſions. The ſons, a long time exiled, re-entered the poſſeſſions of their fathers, not dejected, but triumphant, robuſt, in a ſtate to improve them. The uſurpers of the throne of the Conſtantines ſunk into the bogs of their ancient marſhes; and thoſe barriers that Superſtition, and its inſeparable and dreadful colleague, Tyranny, had placed againſt reaſon and the arts, from the rivers Save and the Danube, to the borders of the ancient Tanais, were broke down by a people of the North, with the iron hand that ſupported them. Philoſophy again appeared in her original ſanctuary, and the country of Themiſtocles and Miltiades again embraced the ſtatue of Liberty: It roſe as bold and noble as in thoſe fair days when it ſhone in all its ſplendor, and with a power extended over all its original domain. There was no more ſeen a Sardanapalus ſleeping,

oppreſſed

oppressed by the weight of barbarities, caused by a vizier and a bow-string, while his vast dominions, despoiled and languishing, were plunged in the sleep of death.

The animating breath of liberty now gives them fresh vigour. It has a creative spirit that produces prodigies unknown to slavish nations. The dominions of the Grand Signior were at first possessed by his neighbours; but two centuries after they formed a republic, that commerce renders flourishing and formidable.

They had given a grand masquerade, where formerly was the seraglio; the most delicious wines, and every other refreshment, was there provided, with a profusion that did not in the least interfere with the most refined delicacy. The following evening they represented the tragedy of Mahomet, in the theatre built on the ruins of the ancient mosque called St. Sophia.

* * *

ROME, *the*.... *.

The emperor of Italy has received at the Capitol, the visit of the bishop of Rome, who very respectfully offered

* How execrable is the name of Rome to my ears! How fatal has been that city to the universe! From its first foundation, owing to a handful of ruffians, how faithful has it been

offered up his prayers to heaven for the preservation of that monarch's days, and the prosperity of his dominions.

been to its original institution. Where shall we find a more voracious, subtle, and inhuman ambition! It hath extended the chains of oppression over the whole known world. Neither strength, nor valour, nor the most heroic virtues, has been able to preserve mankind from slavery. What demon has presided over its conquests, and precipitated the flight of its eagles! O, fatal republic! What monstrous despotism has ever had such detestable effects! O Rome, how I hate thee! What a people are they who go about the earth destroying the liberties of others, and at last destroy their own! What a people were they, who, when surrounded by all the arts, could enjoy the entertainment of gladiators, fix a curious eye on the wretch whose blood gushed forth, and required the victim to assume an unconcern for death, to give the lie to nature in his last moments, by appearing delighted with the applause of myriads of barbarous hands! What a people were they, who, after having assumed an unjust dominion over the universe, could suffer, without complaining, so many emperors to rule them with a rod of iron, and who shewed a servility as base as their tyranny had been arrogant. But all this was trifling. A superstition, the most absurd and most ridiculous, assumed in its turn, the throne of despotic power, and had for her ministers Ignorance and Barbarity. After Rome had devoured mankind in the name of its country, it devoured them in the name of God. Then blood was shed for the chimerical service of heaven, a cruelty of which the world had produced no instance. Rome was the infectious gulf from whence exhaled those fatal opinions that divided mankind, and armed them against each other for phantoms. Soon it engendered, under the name of pontiffs, who called themselves the vicars of God, the most odious monsters. When compared with those tygers that bore the keys and the triple crown, Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, were but vulgar

dominions*. The bishop returned on foot, with all the humility of a true servant of God. All those beautiful

vulgar villains. The people, as if struck by a petrifying rod, vegetated a thousand years under a despotic theocracy. The sacerdotal empire covered all, concealed all in its darkness. Human beings no longer existed but to obey the decrees of a deified mortal. He spoke, and his voice was the commanding thunder. Then were seen crusades, a tribunal of inquisitors, prescriptions, anathemas, excommunications: invisible thunders, that were hurled to the ends of the earth. Those Christians, with faith and rancour in their hearts, were not able to satisfy themselves with murders: a new world, a world entire, was necessary to glut their rage. They would compel mankind by force to adopt their chimeras. It was the image of the cross that was the signal for those horrible devastations: wherever it appeared, blood flowed in torrents: and even at this day the same religion authorizes the slavery of wretches, who search, in the entrails of the earth, that gold of which Rome is the most shameless idolator.

Thou city of seven hills! what swarms of calamities have issued from thine infernal womb! What art thou! Whence derivest thou thy power over this unhappy globe? Has the maleficent Arimanis, the origin of evil, fixed his seat within thy walls? Art thou the gate at which misfortunes enter? Do thy foundations touch the roof of hell? When will that fatal talisman be broken, which, though it has lost somewhat of its power, is still so baneful to mankind? O Rome, how I hate thee! May at least the memory of thy iniquities remain! may it constitute thy infamy, and never be effaced! and may every heart, burning with just indignation, be filled, like mine, with horror at thy name!

* The throne of despotic power is fixed on the altar, which only supports it to swallow it up.

beautiful antique monuments that were cast into the Tyber, where they have lain buried for so many years, have been lately taken up and placed in different parts of Rome. They have found means of recovering them without infecting the air with any dangerous exhalation.

The bishop of Rome is continually employed in forming a code of rational and affecting morality. He has published the Catechism of human reason. He particularly applies himself in furnishing a new degree of evidence to those truths that are of real importance to man. He keeps a register of all generous, charitable, and illustrious actions; he makes them public, and characterises every species of virtue. Judge of kings and of nations, by virtue of his ardent love for humanity, he reigns by that invisible empire which invests him with the spirit of wisdom, of justice, and truth. He softens, he conciliates the differences of mankind. His bulls, wrote in all languages, announce not obscure, useless dogmas, or sentences of eternal divisions, but expatiate on the attributes of the Divinity, of his universal presence, of the life to come, and the sublimity of virtue. The Chinese, the Japanese, the inhabitants of Surinam and Kamschatka, read them with edification.

* * * *

Naples, the ...

Our academy of belles lettres has given the prize to a candidate named ——. The subject was, an exact determination of what cardinals were in the eighteenth

eighteenth century, the principles and manners of that extraordinary sort of men; what passed in the prison of the conclave, and the precise time when they became again what they were in the infancy of Christianity. The successful author has fully satisfied the inquiries of the academy. He has even given a description of the cap and red hat. This dissertation is not less entertaing than elaborate.

They have represented at a booth in the fair, the farce of St. Januarius, which was formerly treated in so serious a manner. All the world knows that his blood was supposed to liquify every year. They have parodied this ridiculous story in a manner highly comic.

The treasures of our Lady of Loretto*, that used to be employed in feeding and clothing the poor, have been lately applied to the constructing an aqueduct, as there are no longer any poor. The riches of

* For fifteen centuries past we have seen scarce any other public buildings in all Europe than Gothic churches, with high pointed steeples. The pictures we there see offer very few subjects but what are hideous and disgustful. But what monasteries richly endowed! What opulent universities! What asylums open to idleness and a theological jargon It was, however, at the time the people were in the greatest poverty, that the secret was found of erecting these sumptuous cathedrals and monasteries. How flourishing would those nations have been, if they had employed in aqueducts and canals, those immense sums that were squandered away in enriching priests and nuns?

of the ancient cathedral of Toledo, deſtroyed in the year 1867, ought to be applied to the ſame purpoſe. See on this ſubject the learned diſſertations of——, in 1999.

* * *

Madrid, the . . .

Enacted, that no perſon ſhall take the name of Dominic, as it is that of the barbarian who formerly eſtabliſhed the inquiſition*. Enacted, that the name of Philip II. ſhall be eraſed from the liſt of the Spaniſh monarchs.

The ſpirit of induſtry is every day more manifeſt, by the uſeful diſcoveries they make in all the arts. The academy of ſciences have juſt given a new ſyſtem of electricity, founded on more than twenty thouſand ſeparate experiments.

* * *

London, the . . . .

This city is three times as large as it was in the eighteenth century. The whole ſtrength of the nation may

* Every mind in which fanaticiſm has not ſtifled all ſentiments of humanity, muſt be diſtracted with indignation and pity on the thought of thoſe barbarities, thoſe ſtudied tortures that religious fury has incited men to invent. The ſtories of Cannibals and Anthropophagi are leſs horrible. Torquemada, inquiſitor of Spain, boaſted of having deſtroyed, by fire and ſword, more than fifty thouſand heretics. We every where find bloody traces of that religious ferocity. Is that the divine law which calls itſelf the ſupport of politics and morality!

may reſide, without any ill conſequence, in the capital, as commerce is the ſoul of it, and the commerce of a republican people does not draw after it thoſe fatal evils that attend a monarchy. England conſtantly maintains its ancient ſyſtem. It is good, becauſe it enriches, not the monarch, but the people; from whence ariſes that equality which prevents exceſſive opulence and exceſſive miſery.

The Engliſh are conſtantly the firſt people in Europe. They enjoy the ancient glory of having offered to their neighbours, an example of that form of government which becomes men jealous of their rights and their happineſs.

They no longer regard the anniverſary of the death of Charles I. They are more perfect in their politics. A new ſtatue of Cromwell has been lately erected; the colours of the marble are ſo intimately blended, that it is hard to ſay whether it be black or white. The aſſemblies of the people will be hereafter held in the preſence of this ſtatue, as that great man was the real author of their happy and immutable conſtitution*.

The

* J. J. Rouſſeau attributes the ſtrength, the ſplendor, and liberty of England, to the deſtruction of thoſe wolves with which it was formerly infeſted. Happy nation! It has drove away wolves a thouſand times more dangerous, and ſuch as ſtill deſolate other countries.

* *Many objects look beſt at a diſtance; it would be happy for us if we could ſee our country from the ſame point of light with this foreigner.*

The Scotch and Iriſh have preſented a petition to parliament, that the names of Scotland and Ireland may be aboliſhed, and that they may make but one body, ſpirit, and name, with the Engliſh, as they are one by that patriotic ſpirit with which they are animated.

* * *

Vienna, the....

Auſtria, who has ever provided Europe with a race of amiable princeſſes, announces that ſhe now has ſeven marriageable beauties, who will eſpouſe thoſe princes of the earth that have given the faireſt proofs of tenderneſs for their people.

* * *

From the Hague, the....

This laborious people, who have made a garden of a ſoil the moſt marſhy and barren, who have brought all the productions ſcattered over the earth to a ſpot that ſcarcely produces a flint, are inceſſantly exerciſing their ſurpriſing induſtry, and ſhowing the world, what fortitude, patience, and perſeverance can perform. An extreme thirſt for gold no longer prevails among them. This republic has become more powerful by diſcovering thoſe ſnares that were ſecretly intended to deſtroy it. They found that it was more eaſy to ſet bounds to the enraged ocean, than to reſiſt an inſidious metal; and they now defend

ſend themſelves with as much reſolution againſt luxury as againſt the aſſaults of the ſea.

* * *

Paris, the ....

Twelve veſſels, of ſix hundred tuns each, are arrived at this capital, and have brought plenty of proviſions. We now eat fiſh without paying ten times their original value. The new bed of the Seine, dug from Rouen to this city, requiring ſome reparations, they have aſſigned the ſum of a million and a half of livres, to be taken from the public treaſury. That ſum will be ſufficient, as they make no uſe of regiſters or undertakers.

A moſt devouring, inſolent, puerile, capricious and enormous luxury, no longer reigns on the borders of the Seine; but one that promotes induſtry, that creates new commodities, and adds to our conveniences; an uſeful and neceſſary luxury, ſo eaſy to be diſtinguiſhed, and which ought never to be confounded with that of pride and oſtentation, which inſults the ſtation of the common people, and tends to render it wretched by its effects and example*.

The

* When ſhall we ceaſe to ſee that monſtrous inequality of fortunes, that exceſſive opulence, which produces ſo much extreme indigence, and is the ſource of all our crimes! When ſhall we ceaſe to ſee the poor labourer, unable to relieve himſelf by his induſtry, from a miſery in which he is held by the very laws of his country! Another

ſtretch-

They have repaired the ſtatue of Voltaire, which the literati, the moſt diſtinguiſhed by their talents and their probity, erected while he was yet living. His right foot is placed on the ignoble front of F***; but as the public contempt has much diſfigured the face of that Zoilus, they would repair it in a manner that ſhall ſhew all ſenſeleſs critics the fate that will attend them. As they have not preſerved the portrait of that ſcribler, who wrote a periodical work for bread; they want to know the head of what baſe, envious and malignant animal they ſhall put in its ſtead?

The Pariſians have now juſt notions of their natural, civil, and political rights. They no longer ſtupidly imagine that they have aſſigned to another the property of their perſons and effects. They are ſtill fond of bon mots, of ſongs and vaudevilles; but they have learned, at the ſame time, to give a ſolidity to thoſe pleaſantries.

* * *

I turned and returned theſe looſe ſheets; I ſtill ſought ſomething curious. I looked for the article Verſailles,

ſtretching forth a trembling hand, fearful at once of the looks and the repulſe of his fellow-mortal! When ſhall we ceaſe to ſee thoſe monſters, that turn away their heads, and refuſe him a morſel of bread! When will thoſe very men ceaſe to famiſh a city, by making the proviſions as dear as in a town that is beſieged! But the finances are exhauſted, commerce in general ſinks, the nation is harraſſed with miſeries; all ſuffers, and the manners of people conſequently ſuffer a horrid depravation. Alas! alas!

Verſailles, but my eager ſight could never find it. The maſter of the houſe perceived my embarraſſment, and aſked me what I ſought. The moſt intereſting article in the world, I replied; news from the place where the court commonly reſides; in ſhort, the article of Verſailles; ſo particular, ſo various, and intereſting in the French gazette*. He ſmiled and ſaid; "I know not what is become of the French gazette, ours is that of truth, and is never guilty of the ſin of omiſſion. Our monarch conſtantly reſides in the capital. He is ſurrounded by the regards of the people. His ear is conſtantly open to their cries. He does not hide himſelf in a ſort of deſert, ſurrounded by a herd of gilded ſlaves. He reſides in the centre of his dominions, as the ſun in the centre of the univerſe. That, moreover, is a bridle that holds him within the courſe of his duty. He has no other way to learn all that he ought to know, than by that univerſal voice which pierces directly to his throne. To check that voice would be to rebel againſt the laws; for the monarch is made for the people, and not the people for the monarch.

CHAP.

* How ſevere a ſcourge is printing, when it tells a whole nation, that, on ſuch a day, ſuch a man put on at court the habit of a ſlave! That another diſhonoured himſelf with all the pomp imaginable! And that a third had at length obtained the reward of his infamous conduct! What a collection of inſipidities! What a grovelling wretched ſtyle?

CHAP. XLIII.

THE FUNERAL ORATION OF A PEASANT.

CURIOUS to ſee what was become of that Verſailles where I had formerly beheld on one ſide, the ſplendor of a king in the higheſt degree of oſtentation; and on the other a race of clerks, inſolent ſcribblers, extending their impertinent idleneſs to the higheſt degree poſſible. I dreamt that like Joſhua, I ſtopped the courſe of the ſun, as it was haſtily declining; it ſtood ſtill at my prayer, as at that of the Jewiſh general; and my intention was, I think, leſs criminal than his.

I was on the road in a carriage, that was not a pot-de-chambre*. Paſſing by a village I ſaw a company of peaſants, their eyes dejected and wet with tears, who were entering a temple. The ſight ſtruck me; I ordered the carriage to ſtop, and followed them in. I ſaw in the middle of the temple the corpſe of an old man, in the habit of a peaſant, whoſe white hairs hung down to the ground. The paſtor of the village mounted a ſmall eminence, and ſaid:

" My fellow countrymen,

" The man you here ſee was for ninety years a be-
" nefactor to man kind. He was the ſon of a huſband-
" man,

* This is the name given to the hackney coaches that go between Paris and the court. They are commonly filled with valets, that go to Verſailles in ſearch of plunder, and may therefore properly be ſaid to carry the dregs of France.

" man, and in infancy his feeble hands attempted " to guide the plough. As ſoon as his legs could " ſupport him he followed his father in the furrows. " When years had given him that ſtrength for which " he long wiſhed, he ſaid to his father, Ceaſe from " your labours: and from that time, each riſing ſun " has ſeen him till the ground, ſow, plant, and reap " the harveſt. He has cultivated more than two " thouſand acres of freſh land. He has planted the " vine in all the country round about; and to him " you owe thoſe fruit trees that nouriſh your village, " and afford you ſhelter from the ſun. It was not " avarice that made him unwearied in his labours; " no, it was the love of induſtry for which he was " wont to ſay, man was born; and the great and " ſacred belief that God regarded him when culti- " vating his lands for the nouriſhment of his chil- " dren.

" He married, and had twenty-five children. He " formed them all to labour and to virtue, and they " have all maintained an unblemiſhed character. He " has taken care to marry them properly, and led " them with a ſmiling aſpect to the altar. All his " grand-children have been brought up in his houſe; " and you know what a pure, unalterable joy dwells " upon their countenances. All theſe brethren love " one another, becauſe he loved them, and made " them ſee what pleaſure he found in loving them.

" On days of rejoicing, he was the firſt to ſound " the rural inſtruments; and his looks, his voice, and

" and geſture, you know, were the ſignals for univer-
" ſal mirth. You cannot but remember his gaiety,
" the lively effect of a peaceful mind, and his ſpeeches
" full of ſenſe and wit; for he had the gift of exer-
" ciſing an ingenious raillery without giving offence.
" He cheriſhed order, from an internal ſenſe he had
" of virtue. Whom has he ever refuſed to ſerve?
" When did he ſhew himſelf unconcerned at public
" or private misfortunes? When was he indifferent
" in his country's cauſe? His heart was devoted to
" it; in his converſation he conſtantly wiſhed for its
" proſperity.

" When age had bent his body, and his legs trem-
" bled under him, you have ſeen him mount to the
" ſummit of a hill, and give leſſons of experience to
" the young huſbandmen. His memory was the
" faithful depoſitory of obſervations made during the
" courſe of fourſcore ſucceſſive years, on the changes
" of the ſeveral ſeaſons. Such a tree, planted by
" his hand, in ſuch a year, recalled to his memory
" the favour or the wrath of heaven. He had by
" heart what other men forget, the fruitful harveſts,
" the deaths and legacies to the poor. He ſeemed
" to be endowed with a prophetic ſpirit, and when
" he meditated by the light of the moon, he knew
" with what ſeeds to enrich his garden. The even-
" ing before his death he ſaid, My children, I am
" drawing nigh to that Being, who is the Author
" of all good, whom I have always adored, and in
" whom I truſt. To-morrow prune your pear-trees,

" and

"and at the setting of the sun, bury me at the head "of my grounds.

"You are now, children, going to place him there, "and ought to imitate his example. But, before "you inter these white hairs, which have so long "attracted respect, behold with reverence his hard-"ened hands; behold the honourable marks of his "long labours."

The orator then held up one of his cold hands. It had acquired twice the usual size by continual labour, and seemed to be invulnerable to the point of the briar, or the edges of the flint. He then respectfully kissed the hand, and all the company followed his example.

His children bore him to the grave on three sheaves of corn, and buried him as he had desired, placing on his grave, his hedging-bill, his spade, and a plough-share.

Ah! I cried, if those men celebrated by Bossuet, Flechier, Mascaron, and Neuville, had the hundredth part of the virtue of this villager, I would pardon them their pompous and futile eloquence.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV.

VERSAILLES.

I ARRIVED at Verſailles, and looked round for that ſuperb palace, from whence iſſued the deſtiny of many nations. What was my ſurpriſe! I could perceive nothing but ruins, gaping walls, and mutilated ſtatues; ſome porticos, half-demoliſhed, afforded a confuſed idea of its ancient magnificence. As I walked over theſe ruins, I ſaw an old man ſitting upon the capital of a column. Alas! I ſaid to him, what is become of this vaſt palace?—"It is fallen."—How?—"It was cruſhed by its own weight. A "man in his impatient pride would have here forced "nature. He haſtily heaped buildings upon build-"ings; greedy of gratifying his capricious will, he "haraſſed his ſubjects; all the wealth of the nation "was here ſwallowed up; here flowed a ſtream of "tears to compoſe thoſe reſervoirs of which there "are now no traces. Behold all that remains of that "coloſſus which a million of hands erected with ſo "much painful labour. The foundations of this "palace were laid in iniquity; it was an image of "the wretched greatneſs of him that built it*. The "kings,

* We magnify thoſe pompous ſpectacles given to the Roman people; and from them we would infer the grandeur of that empire; but it was wretched when it began to exhibit thoſe faſtuous ſhews, in which the fruits of their victories were diſſipated with prodigality. Who built their circuſes, their theatres, their baths? Who dug thoſe artificial lakes, where a whole fleet was exerciſed as in open ſea?

" kings, his ſucceſſors, were obliged to fly from it, " leſt they ſhould be cruſhed by its fall. O, may " theſe ruins cry aloud to all ſovereigns; that they " who abuſe a momentary power, only diſcover their " weakneſs to future generations."—At theſe words, he ſhed a flood of tears, and turned his eyes to heaven with a mournful, repenting look. Why do you weep? I ſaid. All the world is happy, and theſe ruins by no means declare any public calamity. He raiſed his voice and ſaid: " Oh, how wretched is " my fate! Know that I am Lewis XIV. who built " this rueful palace. The Divine Juſtice has again " illumined the torch of my days, to make me con- " template more nearly my deplorable enterprize. " How tranſient are the moments of pride; I muſt " now and for ever weep. O, that I had but " known* ....." I was going to aſk him a queſtion, when one of the adders, with which this place ſwarmed, darted from a broken column, ſtung me on the neck, and I waked.

ſea? Thoſe crowned monſters, whoſe tyrannic pride cruſhed one half of the people to divert the other. The enormous boaſted pyramids of Egypt are nothing more than monuments of deſpotiſm. Republics may conſtruct aqueducts, canals, highways, and public places; but every palace that is erected by an arbitrary monarch, forms the foundation of an approaching calamity.

* Placed in the middle of Europe, commanding the ocean, and by the long extent and winding of its coaſts, over the ſeas of Flanders, Spain, and Germany, communicating with the Mediterranean, &c. what a kingdom is France! and what people ſeem to have more right to be happy!

THE END.